

TRUCK WEST

May 2009 Volume 20, Issue 5

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at www.trucknews.com

Unwelcome competition

New freight service from B.C. Ferries draws fire

By Jan Westell

DELTA, B.C. – A Delta, B.C. company that offers a drop trailer service linking Vancouver Island with the mainland is not impressed that a former Crown Corporation is launching a competing service.

B.C. Ferries has initiated a pilot project providing a drop-off service for commercial truck trailers for transport between Vancouver Island and the Mainland.

B.C. Ferry Services (BCFS) reports that it is allowing trailer drop-offs for one select customer, for this experimental service that is operating between the Tsawwassen ferry terminal on the Mainland, and Duke Point, south of Nanaimo.

The trailers are being loaded by B.C. Ferries' dock workers for subsequent pick-up by the transport company on the opposite side of the ferry route. BCFS indicates that the program, which began about two weeks ago, is still in the experimental stages.

"We're basically just testing right now, to work out any bugs that might be in our system," said B.C. Ferry spokesperson, Deborah Marshall. "Our previous operation is to have roll-on/roll-off live traffic with commercial vehicles. But what we want to do, is to offer

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A DIFFERENT KIND OF CONGESTION: It may not be Vancouver at rush hour, but log haulers face congestion of their own on over-used forest roads that attract more than just logging traffic. Photo courtesy the Truck Loggers Association

Sharing the road

Log truckers clash with recreationalists on B.C. forest roads

By Jan Westell

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – Once called logging roads and built primarily for that use, B.C. now has about 500,000 kilometres of resource roads with about 20,000 to 30,000 kilometres added to that network every year.

These so-called 'resource roads'

are not used solely for forestry purposes anymore, but are also shared with B.C.'s oil and gas sector, mining, and recreational use.

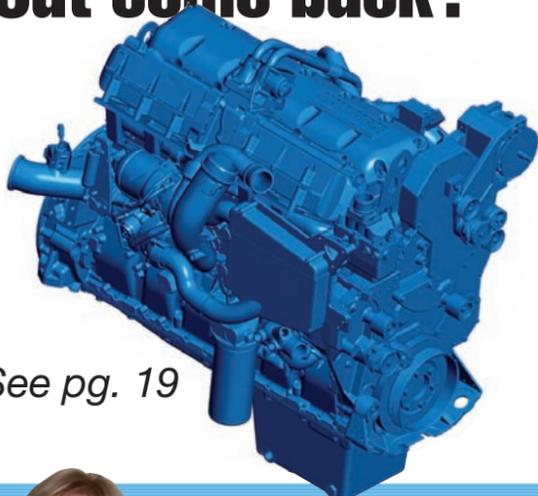
As a result, MaryAnne Arcand, director of the Forestry TruckSafe Program and Northern Initiatives with the B.C. Forest Safety Council is dismayed at the many hazards

that face log haulers on a daily basis. She says log haulers have the highest accident rate in the forestry industry, behind tree fallers.

One of the greatest threats is truck rollovers, mainly because of the erratic standards of construction and maintenance for resource

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Has the Cat come back?

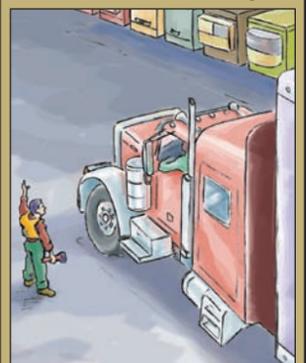


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Mark Dalton O/O



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May 2009, Volume 20, Issue 5
 Canada Post Canadian Publications
 Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 40069240
 "Return Postage Guaranteed"
12 Concorde Pl., Suite 800, Toronto, Ont., M3C 4J2
 Sales: 416-510-6892 / Editorial: 416-510-6896
 Fax: 416-510-5143

Truck West, USPS 017-178 is published monthly by Business Information Group, a division of BIG Magazines L.P., a leading Canadian information company with interests in daily and community newspapers and B-2-B information services. US office of publication: 2424 Niagara Falls Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-5709. Periodicals Postage Paid at Niagara Falls, NY. US postmaster: Send address changes to Truck West, PO Box 1118, Niagara Falls, NY 14304.

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 Circulation inquiries: 416-442-5600 ext. 3553
 Change of address: Please include subscription number from mailing label.

Subscription rates: Canada (Includes GST) – One year \$40.60; U.S. – one year \$66.95; foreign – one year \$66.95

Send subscription orders, address changes (incl. mailing label from latest issue) to above address. On occasion, our subscription list is made available to organizations whose products or services may be of interest to readers. If you prefer not to receive such information, please write to us. Please allow 8 weeks for changes or corrections.

PAP Registration No. 11065

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Canada Magazine Fund, towards our editorial costs.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

Canada

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Re-evaluating how we measure success

'How many trucks you got?' Go to any industry function where there's a large contingent of fleet owners and it's likely the most common question you'll hear. For as long as I've been in the industry, the answer to that question has served as the primary indicator of a company's success. The more trucks a fleet is running, the better they're doing financially – at least that's what one would assume.

But several years ago at an industry function out west, I learned an important lesson from a good friend who ran a very successful small truck fleet, serving a highly-specialized market.

He was a bit standoffish and uncomfortable when it came to mingling with his peers at industry events, and I asked him why?

His answer surprised me. To paraphrase, he said 'At events like this, you're judged by how many trucks you have. It's the very first question anyone asks you: 'How many trucks do you have?' and that's how they determine how important or successful you are.'

He resented that attitude, and said they might as well make everyone in the room remove their pants and establish a pecking order based on who has the most impressive...well, you get the point.

I found his comments to be interesting, and from that point on I made a conscious effort not to make 'How many trucks do you have?' my first question when speaking to a fleet owner. It had never occurred to me that the notion a fleet's truck count is indicative of its success could be offensive to some.

Frankly, I had forgotten all about that conversation until recently. The other day, I was reading an interview that editorial director Lou Smyrlis conducted with Dan Einwechter, the out-

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



spoken president and CEO of Challenger Motor Freight.

This comment immediately caught my attention: "I just came from the Truckload Carriers Association conference in Orlando. The recurring theme I heard was that carriers are realizing they don't need to have more trucks to be successful. They are going to manage the bottom line and not the top line and not be as concerned about growing their number of trucks.

It used to be truckers would use the size of their fleet as their scorecard. That scorecard is going to change significantly."

I couldn't help but smile, and remember my previous conversation with that friend out west. I spoke to him recently and despite the recession, business is still going strong. His company resisted the temptation to add power units when the economy was firing on all cylinders, and it has not been forced to downsize now that demand has slowed in line with the economy.

Instead of adding tractors, the company has invested in its people. It recently

finished building a new state-of-the-art, \$2.5 million terminal that offers the very best in driver amenities.

It was refreshing to read Einwechter's comments on how carriers are re-evaluating how they measure their success.

We all know it's better to run a profitable 10-truck business than a 100-truck fleet that's bleeding money.

It's about time the industry acknowledges success is not measured by how many trucks you've got, but how effectively you manage them *and* your bottom line. □

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Seeing straight at the border

There have been some funny things going on at the border the last couple of years. It would be fair to say things are not as they seem.

For example, while any transborder trucker would tell you business has been on the decline since about the fourth quarter of 2006, the statistics don't bear that out.

The rising value of energy exports from western Canada for much of 2007 and 2008 served to mask the consistently declining volumes of exports from the manufacturing sector in central Canada. While to many politicians an export is an export, the reality for motor carriers, and those based in central Canada in particular, is that the demise of manufacturing exports is a serious issue that requires addressing.

The other mirage at the border is that more than seven years after 9/11 and the myriad of security programs that were spawned, it is actually getting easier to cross it. Certainly the extended border delays that frazzled the nerves of transborder truckers for years have eased. But, as the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) pointed out when it recently appeared be-

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
 Editorial Director



fore the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade, this should not be taken as any indication that all is now running smoothly.

All it shows is a temporary reprieve caused by the drop in truck traffic crossing the border.

The problems that have thickened the border in recent years – inconsistency between US and Canadian regulations, border guard staffing issues and inadequate infrastructure – have not been solved. In fact, CTA argues that despite the drastic drop-off in volumes, border processing times have barely changed at all.

When the North American economy eventually recovers, the problems that plagued motor carriers and their exporter customers will quickly rise to the surface and will do so at a time when we can

least afford any obstacles to what may prove to be a fragile recovery for our beleaguered manufacturing sector.

And things could get worse if legislation currently being considered by our own government is adopted.

The Canadian Border Services Agency is proposing to turn back trucks if the importer data has not yet been received before the truck arrived at the border. The truck would no longer be moved in-bond to an inland facility for clearance.

What should be done? A huge part of the problem at the border stems from the fact there are too many government agencies involved in setting legislation.

As David Bradley, the head of the CTA points out, it can be a challenge just to find out who's who and to get the different people working together.

CTA's recommendation to create a cabinet committee on the border and/or a specific ministerial or senior bureaucratic position with authority for all aspects of the border is a sound one and deserves consideration. □

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

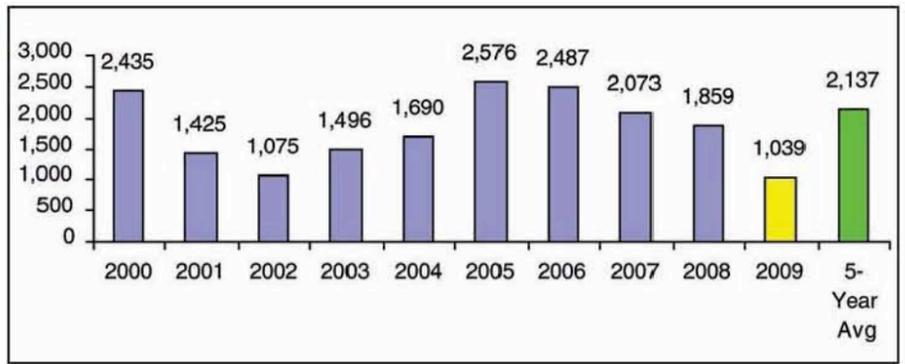
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There were just 1,039 Class 8 trucks sold in Canada in February, the lowest February sales tally for the decade and lower than January's sales. It was also about 1,000 units off the five-year average. (It should be noted that five-year average includes the industry's peak years of 2004 to 2006.) Truck makers are very concerned the industry's excess capacity situation combined with the slumping economy will result in a significant drop in sales even from last year's lackluster performance. There is a great deal of excess capacity in the market right now and the deterioration of the global economy also means that sales of used trucks to emerging markets such as China and Russia have slowed down considerably. Also there is not much hope there will be much of a pre-buy this year.

Monthly Class 8 Sales - Feb 09

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	239	471
Kenworth	75	333
Mack	91	120
International	320	311
Peterbilt	67	209
Sterling	90	134
Volvo	101	209
Western Star	56	72
TOTALS	1,039	1,859

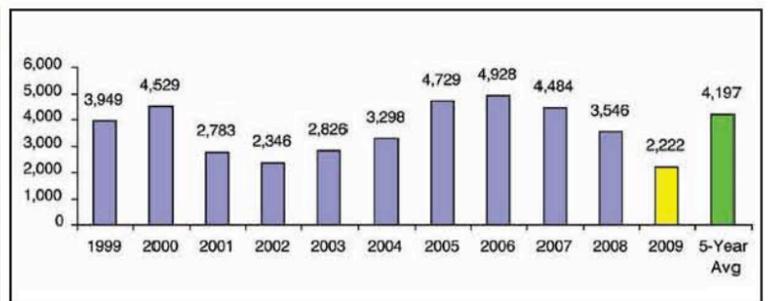
Historical Comparison - February 09 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Feb 09) by Province and OEM

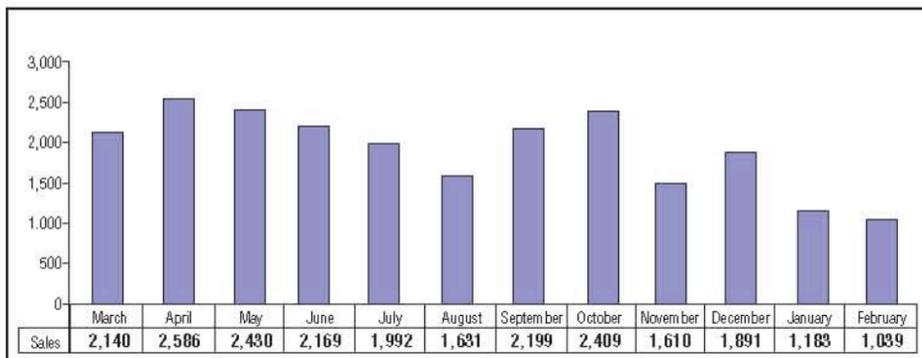
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	40	72	27	17	174	98	39	8	0	0	473
Kenworth	26	69	11	8	32	30	8	2	0	0	186
Mack	4	20	13	14	84	25	8	3	0	0	171
International	22	98	14	29	350	195	21	10	0	6	745
Peterbilt	10	25	11	3	35	23	3	3	0	0	113
Sterling	34	30	5	0	51	45	6	4	0	2	177
Volvo	14	24	10	12	93	24	8	13	0	1	199
Western Star	24	72	8	7	17	7	17	8	0	1	158
TOTALS	174	410	99	87	836	448	107	51	0	10	2,222

Historical Comparison - YTD



Total Class 8 truck sales for 2008 ended at 24,623, which is about 600 units off the previous year's admittedly slow pace and about 5,000 units off the five-year average for Canada. And judging by the extremely slow start in January and February and fears the recession will be as deep or deeper than the one that ravaged the North American economy in 1981-82 there's little hope for optimism for 2009. Sales are more than 1,000 off last year's YTD pace and the worst over the past decade. In total, 2008 ranked as the fourth worst sales year of the past decade. But, so far, 2009 is shaping up to be the worst sales year of the decade.

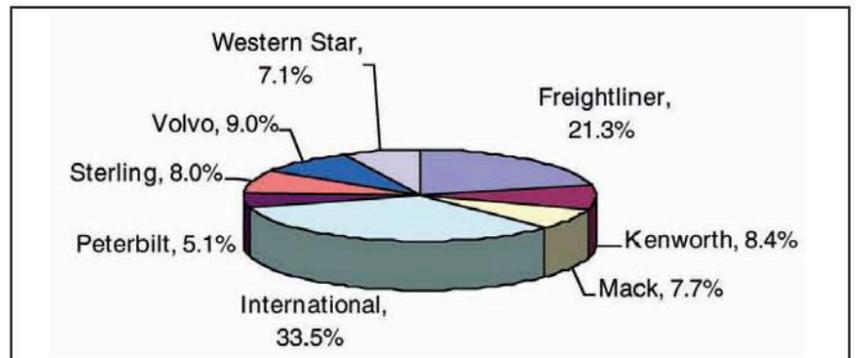
12 - Month Sales Trends



Trucks sales rebounded in September and October, coming in well above 2,000 units sold for each month. This followed sub-par numbers for July and August. But, as expected, that rally could not be sustained in the face of such dire outlooks for the North American economy in many regions and November marked a significant drop. December, historically a slow month, posted better than expected numbers. But 2009 has started off with a definite whimper with meagre sales for January and February.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

Market Share Class 8 YTD



International won the market share title for the second year in a row in 2008, once again beating out former perennial front runner Freightliner. This time, the lead was by more than 6%. And International is taking advantage of the downturn to further expand its market share lead. After the first two months of 2009, it controls an impressive one third of Class 8 sales in the Canadian market. International jumped out of the starting blocks with a lead in the first quarter last year as well, but this time it has managed to increase its market share compared to last year at this time by more than 10%. Freightliner still controls more than a fifth of the market but with Kenworth and Peterbilt falling back considerably no other truck maker enjoys more than a 10% market share.

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In Brief

Winnipeg truck route faces closure

WINNIPEG, Man. – The Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) is opposed to a proposal by the city of Winnipeg, to shut down Plessis Road as a designated truck route.

According to the MTA, the proposal by Transcona Councillor Russ Wyatt to close Plessis Road as a truck route will penalize the trucking industry in more ways than one. The MTA also objects to Wyatt's claim that Plessis Road is a short-cut. Instead, the Plessis Road meets the city's criteria for classification as a truck route, in the MTA's opinion.

Since the trucking industry has made significant strides in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, this closure would create more emissions, rather than reduce them, states the MTA.

"To reduce our greenhouse gas emissions means that our industry must conduct its business in the most efficient and productive manner reasonable, and minimize kilometres travelled," said MTA general manager, Bob Dolyniuk. "The elimination of Plessis Road as a truck route will cause the exact opposite."

If adopted, the MTA manager predicts that the city's plan would be costly to both the citizens of Winnipeg, and to the trucking industry, since the city has expended \$10 million in the last two years developing Plessis Road as a double-divided regional street and

truck route. "To spend that amount of money on a street and then re-designate to a non-truck route street, is a complete waste of taxpayers' dollars."

The MTA charges that this new transportation plan will inflict a minimum of \$1 million per year of additional and unnecessary cost to the trucking industry (based on identified trips by the city of Winnipeg and truck operating costs identified by Transport Canada), all of which would be subsequently passed on to the shipping community, and ultimately the businesses and residents of Winnipeg.

Additionally, the MTA references a city transportation report that calculated the number of trucks that travel Plessis Road in a typical 12-hour weekday, to be 428 trucks, compared to busier truck routes that carry as many as 3,480 trucks.

As Winnipeg puts itself forward as a multi-modal transportation hub, the MTA argues that such a hub requires an efficient truck route system.

An efficient truck route system must allow reasonable access to all areas of the city, and must also allow the efficient movement of trucks from one area of the city to others, according to Dolyniuk.

"This is a role that Plessis Road provides in the city of Winnipeg's Truck Route System, and this should not change." □

Trucker Buddy needs some new friends, fast

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – The Trucker Buddy pen pal program that connects professional drivers with elementary school students is in need of help. The charitable organization announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show that it's in desperate need of sponsors, since the faltering economy has taken its toll on donations and sponsorship packages.

"Many of our traditional corporate sponsors are having difficulties and cannot be as generous as they were in the past," the group said at the show. Trucker Buddy has been around for 17 years, and in that time has informed more than a million children about the important role trucking plays in their daily lives, the organization claims. In 2009 alone, about 55,000 students in 2,755 classrooms were reached through the program. More than 10,000 professional drivers have taken part in the program, including representatives from nearly every province.

"If Trucker Buddy is to survive, it needs your help," the group appealed. Trucker Buddy is urging drivers to join as members and companies to sign up for corporate memberships. For more, visit www.truckerbuddy.org. □

Behind the headlines

Three of five entries submitted by *Truck News/Truck West* took home hardware at the recent Truck Writers of North America (TWNA) communications awards banquet.

Executive editor James Menzies won a gold award in the News category for his entry *Ontario introduces speed limiter legislation*, appearing in the May, 2008 edition.

The article focused on Ontario's controversial Bill 41, which mechanically limits truck speeds to 105 km/h.

Menzies also won a silver award in the Environmental/Regulatory category for his piece *California Nightmares*, which explored what Canadian carriers need to know about complying with California's stringent anti-idling restrictions.

And Joanne Ritchie, executive director of the Owner-Operators' Business Association of Canada (OBAC) won a silver award in the Column category for her monthly column *Voice of the Owner/Operator*.

Since the awards' inception in 2003, *Truck News*, *Truck West* and *MotorTruck Fleet Executive* have won 26 TWNA Communications awards – more than any other Canadian publisher. □

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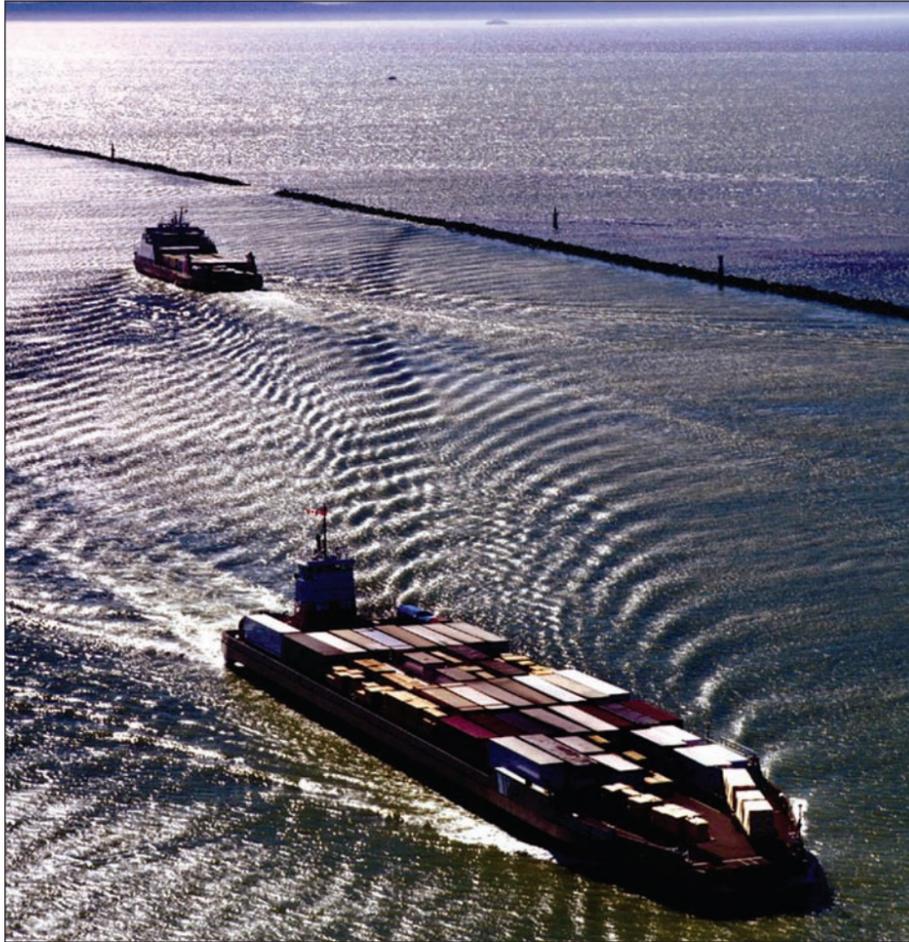
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FAIR FARES?: Coastal Seaspam argues B.C. Ferries receives government subsidies that allow it to offer lower rates for its new freight endeavour.

B.C. Ferries to shuttle trailers to the island

Continued from page 1

more flexible options for our customers, that they will be able to come down and drop off their trailer and then we will take it over to the other side for them.”

How long the pilot project will last, Marshall was unable to confirm, but she did say the former crown corporation is planning to expand the service.

“We do expect to fully launch the service in the near future,” she says. “I just don’t have a date yet.”

The ferry corporation has leased tractors to haul the commercial trailers aboard its regularly-scheduled vessels, which serves both a commercial and a non-commercial clientele.

If the plan is a success, B.C. Ferries indicates it may consider purchasing its own tractors for this roll-on/roll-off service.

However, the BCFS pilot project is not sitting well with Seaspam Coastal, which already provides a similar service exclusively to the transport industry.

“We have heard rumours of BCFS entering this business for years, so their announcement came as no surprise,” said Adrian Samuel, sales and marketing manager for Seaspam Coastal Intermodal, which operates its own drop trailer ferry service for commercial trailers.

“We have linked the (Vancouver) Island and Mainland with a ferry service as a private, non-subsidized company since 1903, and have been actively engaged in the drop trailer service since the 60s. There are other private companies providing drop trailer service as well. None of us have the benefit of the many government subsidies that BCFS enjoy.”

A member of the Washington Marine Group of Companies, Seaspam provides daily scheduled sailings between its three terminals: Tilbury in Delta, and Nanaimo and Swartz Bay on Vancouver Island.

The intermodal company operates four roll-on/roll-off, self-propelled ferries, an articulating tug and barge unit, and a towed barge. Seaspam also delivers trailers and containers for trucking and distribution customers, including rail cars for the Southern Railway of Vancouver Island.

In that respect, Samuel doubts that BCFS can provide the same level of service.

“One question we have is, how BCFS plans to manage handling drop trailers on the same vessels while carrying cars, trucks and passengers? Ferry waits can already be pretty long in the high summer season. So, how do they plan to look after their primary customer – the traveling public – with their expected increase in commercial traffic, and while they’re shuttling trailers off and on their vessels?”

If B.C. Ferries is successful with this new venture, Samuel noted that additional truck traffic on Highway 17, the main artery to the ferry terminal will undoubtedly increase through the communities of Ladner and Tsawwassen.

And while BCFS has denied that its three major runs from the Mainland to Vancouver Island benefit from provincial government subsidies, Samuel continues to insist that it does.

“Traditionally we have viewed our service as being complementary to the service offered by B.C. Ferries,” says Samuel. “Recently they have become an aggressive competitor by targeting the commercial customer with deep rate discounts. We welcome healthy competition and we have had it for years, but we think the playing field should be level – not tilted in BCFS’ direction by massive and ongoing subsidies that allow them to cut rates to one market segment, because the paying public or government will subsidize that segment.” □

Flood warnings

ArvinMeritor offers advice on how to revive trucks that have been submerged under water

WINNIPEG, Man. – The Red River is rising in Manitoba and parts of the US midwest, and at press time, concerns of further flooding ran as high as the reinforced river banks.

ArvinMeritor has assembled the following list of tips for truck owners whose vehicles are affected by floodwaters:

Prolonged, heavy rains in parts of the US and Canada are reminders that brakes, wheel ends, universal joints, and other important heavy-duty vehicle components that have been submerged in water require a thorough inspection for damage.

ArvinMeritor offers advice about the steps vehicle owners should take before the vehicle returns to service:

1. Don’t Start the Vehicle: You risk further component damage if the vehicle’s air lines, wheel-end sensors, seals, or electrical connections are contaminated by water.

2. Ask About Special Service Bulletins: Ask your suppliers or their field representatives about recommended service procedures for submerged components. ArvinMeritor has publications that specifically address the inspection and service of submerged components. Call ArvinMeritor’s Customer Service Center at 800-535-5560 or access publications in the Tech Library on ArvinMeritor’s Web site, available at www.arvinmeritor.com.

3. Record the Conditions: Determine how long the vehicle or component was submerged. Note the type of water – saltwater or

fresh – and any special conditions like heavy silt or chemical contaminants. Look for waterlines, dampness, or other indicators of the depth of the water and inform your technician.

4. Clarify Whether Parts are Warrantable or Serviceable: In general, components that are damaged by flooding are not warrantable. Some components, like the transmission, may need to be returned to the manufacturer for service.

5. Inspect, Clean, Replace: From the brake system to the wheel ends, there are special inspection and service procedures for components, air lines, wiring, and connections that have been submerged in water.

In some cases – universal joints and center bearings, for example – inspection isn’t possible and the component should be replaced. Use OEM-quality replacement parts that match the safety, reliability, or durability of the original.

In other cases, the component must be completely disassembled and checked for water and contaminant damage that includes, but is not limited to, rust and corrosion.

Returning a vehicle to service after a flood requires a careful, comprehensive inspection to ensure that your components will perform as expected.

Before you move the vehicle or make a repair, contact your component supplier’s customer service center or field representative about special procedures for vehicles affected by flooding. □

Arrow joins MTI’s fuel training program

CASTLEGAR, B.C. – Mountain Transport Institute (MTI) has announced that Arrow Transport will participate in the professional driving school’s pilot project, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) with a fleet dedicated to hauling for Wastech Services (recycling and waste management).

“Arrow is demonstrating leadership and a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by joining our pilot program,” says Andy Roberts, president of MTI. “We look forward to helping them reduce their GHG emissions, improve their fuel economy, and providing data to document the improvement.”

Forty-four Arrow drivers will receive specialized training, and one year of individual feedback from MTI’s Fuel Coach driver performance system. The Fuel Coach program has been designed to provide drivers with the information, skills, and motivation to save fuel, according to the company.

The training program incorporates individual driver evaluations before and after an enhanced classroom session, based on the SmartDriver for Highway Trucking program, states MTI. After training, the drivers will receive access to daily reports on their fuel usage from the Fuel Coach driver reporting system, for the next 12 months. The reports provide feedback, which is intended to assist the drivers to improve their fuel performance.

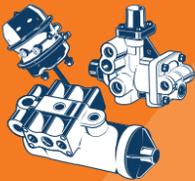
“Reducing our GHG emissions while maintaining or improving operational performance is an important, but not easy to achieve goal for Arrow Transport,” says Tim Bell Arrow’s general manager of interior operations. “We believe the MTI program will help us to achieve those objectives”.

More information about Fuel Coach is available at www.fuel-coach.com. For info on MTI, see www.drivemti.com. □

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Research group looks to expand western presence

By Jan Westell

VANCOUVER, B.C. – Research and development can be a costly exercise, and economically prohibitive for many fleets.

That was a consideration of a few Canadian fleets, after observing the scientific and technical efforts offered by FPIInnovations, a non-profit forest research institute created in 1975, which is located in B.C. and Quebec. At that time, FPIInnovations' research team had developed transportation innovations for the forestry fleet – some of which were also being adopted by over-the-road applications. Out of that recognition, came the formation of Project Innovation Transport (PIT), a dedicated group within FPIInnovations that was created in 2007, to offer strength in unity, for the benefit of research and development for over-the-road fleets.

“The fleets wanted us to work specifically for their own needs,” says Yves Provencher, manager of business development for FPIInnovations, who was responsible for the creation of PIT, which has evolved into a committee of fleets and government organizations motivated by performance improvements instigated by the transportation sector. “So that’s how we created PIT.”

PIT develops, assesses, and implements new technologies for its members. Member fleets get to-

gether twice a year for advisory meetings and make decisions about upcoming research and development projects. At those meetings, PIT partners identify the study projects and FPIInnovations' research arm then undertakes the work. While PIT has not yet developed any innovations specifically for over-the-road transportation, it has done a fair amount of equipment testing, with the results shared by PIT member fleets.

One of those tests is what PIT refers to as Energotest, a campaign undertaken in 2007 and 2008. PIT has tested aerodynamic devices, fuel additives, hydrogen injection systems, wide-base tires and more. “You name it, and we’ve tested it,” says Provencher. “So far, we’ve tested over 30 technologies.”

PIT has also tested best practices, such as the fuel consumption of hauling a container compared to a dry box. Since the container has side walls that are corrugated, there is a great deal more drag than on a dry box. The test analyzed the impact on fuel consumption to determine if transloading to a dry box would be an option on long-distance hauls.

“There was a huge impact, like 14% difference,” says the PIT manager. “The container is more difficult to pull.”

PIT then developed a decision-

making software tool for the computer, where an operator could input handling fees, distance, and fuel consumption, etc., to determine if it is worthwhile pulling the container box based on the distance.

“Knowing this, you can turn around and determine ‘if I have a container to take from Vancouver to Saskatoon, for instance, it may be worth my while to unload the container, put it back in the dry box and then drive with it,’” says Provencher.

PIT has also tested aerodynamic skirts for trailers, which are not all equal in design and benefit, according to PIT test results.

But more important is the installation process, or more specifically the angle of installation. PIT researchers discovered that the angle has a great impact on the performance of the skirt.

For instance, PIT tested a skirt that was giving 7.5% fuel economy improvements but on another trailer, it offered no improvements. After tweaking the angle a bit, PIT brought that economy up to 7.5%.

“So that was very enlightening for us, because then we said ‘it’s not only the skirt, it’s how you install it.’ That’s how/where our researchers are supporting our members, to make sure that not only they implement the technology, but they implement it right.”

With that test, PIT members soon realized the economic benefits, according to Provencher, because aerodynamic skirts may cost between \$1,500 and \$2,000 – a wasted investment if the installation is not effective.

The PIT manager of business development notes that Canadian fleets that have already joined the young research organization, are already innovative with their own operations, and easily understand the benefits of PIT.

As an example, he refers to Bison Transport, a Manitoba company which stands out for its own innovations, including simulators, a research arm, as well as numerous safety initiatives – a cost savings in itself. “Sure enough, they were among the first ones that wanted to become a member of our organization.”

Despite having an office in B.C., located on the University of B.C. campus, membership with PIT in the west is not as strong as it is in the east.

Therefore, Provencher has undertaken trips to the coast recently to seek new members.

“We have met with fleets, (B.C.) Ministry of Transportation and the B.C. Trucking Association. All see great potential in PIT and we are now looking at how to define the best approach to make sure that B.C. fleets can benefit from PIT’s work.” □

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Tax Talk

Should you take early CPP benefits?

The concept of a retirement age may seem to be just that these days – a concept. People are already saving less or dipping into their bank accounts or credit lines to pay for everyday expenses and plan to work longer to make up for it.

If you're 60 or older, there's a potential source of income you may not have considered: a Canada Pension Plan (CPP) retirement pension.

CPP provides monthly, inflation-protected income when you retire or if you become disabled. It's designed to replace about 25% of the earnings on which your CPP contributions were based over your working life, up to a current monthly maximum of \$908.75. For most Canadians, it's the only pension they have.

You don't have to wait until you reach what the government considers "full-retirement age" to qualify for CPP. If you're willing to accept some trade-offs, you can apply for a CPP pension starting at age 60.

How to qualify

One way to qualify for early CPP benefits is to stop working by the end of the month before the CPP retirement pension begins and during the month in which it begins. For example, if you want your pension to begin in June, you have to stop working by the end of May and you can't work during the month of June.

Another way to qualify is to earn less than the current monthly maximum CPP retirement pension payment (\$908.75 in 2009) in the month before your pension begins and in the month it begins.

For example, if you want your pension to begin in June 2009, you need to earn less than \$908.75 in both May and June.

Age and payment amounts

Your pension normally starts the month after you turn 65.



Tax Talk
Scott Taylor

The CPP adjusts the amount you receive by 0.5% for each month before or after your 65th birthday from the time you begin to take your pension.

That's 6% a year. If you start collecting CPP the moment you turn 60, the benefits will be 30% less than you'd get by waiting until you reach 65, but you'll have money in hand you otherwise would not have.

Conversely, if you can wait until you're 70, your payments will be 30% higher than the person who began taking benefits at 65.

Can you afford to wait?

While your monthly payments may be larger financially if you wait, in certain circumstances you should at least consider taking CPP early:

1. You need the money. Taking your CPP benefits early can supplement or replace income you need to pay the bills. It may also enable you to pursue a creative passion – art, travel, education. The personal benefits may outweigh the financial costs.

2. You're in poor health. It's almost impossible to know how to maximize your CPP benefits because no-one can say how long they will live. If you don't expect to live long, you'll want to start collecting your pension as soon as possible despite the reduced amount of the benefits. A caveat: Your dependents can qualify for survivor benefits. You and your spouse should calculate how these benefits would be affected by an early payout.

3. You want to eliminate a

major business cost. Once you start receiving your CPP pension, you can work as much as you want without affecting your pension amount. However, you can't contribute to the CPP on any future earnings from employment.

So let's say you're an owner/operator and 60 years old. You earn \$30,000 net income from your business.

Assuming you live in Ontario, you'll owe \$2,667 in federal tax, \$1,431 in provincial tax, and \$2,624 in CPP contributions – a total of \$6,721. Because business is slow, you stop working for two months and qualify for early CPP benefits of \$4,800 a year.

With a taxable income of \$34,800, you'll owe \$3,870 in federal tax and \$1,880 in provincial tax, but no CPP. The total: \$5,660. You're up the \$4,800 pension plus the difference in the tax payable of \$1,061. By taking CPP early, you have \$5,861 more cash in your pocket.

Check your statement

If you've been working in Canada

and even one CPP contribution has been made for you (by you or your employer) at some point in your career, you're probably entitled to a CPP retirement pension. Don't assume you won't qualify because of your income or the types of jobs you've held.

Take time to find out the details. Visit servicecanada.gc.ca to view or print a copy of your CPP statement.

It will show the total amount of your CPP contributions by year and your pensionable earnings on which they are based.

It will also estimate what your pension or benefit would be if you were eligible to receive it now.

With that in hand, sit down with your accountant or financial advisor about how big a role CPP can or should play in your overall retirement plan.

There's no one-size-fits-all answer. □

– Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, a Waterloo, Ont., company that provides accounting, fuel tax reporting, and other business services for truck fleets and owner/operators. For information, visit www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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Across

1. Driver's pause (4,4)
5. Certain semitrailers
9. Tire type
10. Great Dane or Trailmobile product
11. Province crossed by Highway 401
12. Carrier headquartered in Winnipeg
13. Schedule of duties on imported goods
15. They're sometimes wild
18. Urban-carriers' service, ____ delivery
20. Goods trucked into Canada
23. Completely fill a trailer (4,3)
24. Truck-dealer's document
25. "B.J. and the ____," '79-'81 TV series about trucker
26. Toolbox items

Down

1. Truck-tunes source
2. Floor-mounted lever
3. Adjective for axle or tire
4. New-truck upgrade item
6. Truck-chassis components
7. Suspension components
8. Taxi driver
13. Truck with easy engine access (4,3)
14. Prison in Johnny Cash song
16. Vehicle-cleansing facility
17. Adopt-a-Highway program's target
19. CB-radio brand
21. Temporary traffic diverter
22. Truck buyer's requirements, briefly

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Answers on page 24

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Opinion

Since when did truck inspections become a spectator sport?

You can tell spring is in the air because the roadside truck inspection blitzes are starting up again. Odd, isn't it, how they cease during the winter. I guess warm weather makes trucks unsafe. Or maybe the media camera people and reporters just don't relish waiting around in the cold for a shot of vice grips clamped around a brake hose.

I'm not sure how it works in other parts of Canada, but here in Ontario, the MTO makes a point of sending out media advisories prior to the blitzes to ensure they get coverage. They announce a time and location, and wait for the camera trucks to roll in.

So what's going on here, anyway? Since when has truck inspection and enforcement become a spectator sport?

You don't usually see camera crews following Ministry of

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



Health inspectors around as they ferret cockroaches out from under restaurant counters, or Ministry of Labour inspectors seeking out unsafe work environments.

So why do bald truck tires and broken trailer springs rate a couple of minutes on the six o'clock news? Unsafe trucks play to public anxiety over road safety, so what better way to placate uneasy motorists than by showing them their tax dollars at work?

Ever notice how blitz numbers always suggest that a shocking number of trucks on the road are

unsafe? That's not the case, of course, but try to convince your neighbours otherwise if they've heard it on the news.

What is usually left out of the media reports is whether these roadside blitzes are random or targeted inspections.

The subtle difference would probably be lost on most non-trucking folks anyway, but it can make a big difference in the way the numbers get reported. In a targeted blitz, the cops are purposely seeking out trucks that appear to be under-maintained, and if they know their stuff, the number of infractions they find *should* be high.

But taken out of context, those numbers can be alarming. Take, for example, results of a recent two-day blitz in southern Ontario where 15 out of 26 trucks inspected – over 55% – were deemed

out-of-service.

What isn't reported is the number of trucks that *weren't* inspected. If, say, 1,000 trucks rolled by the inspection point and only 26 were singled out for inspection, the out-of-service rate would be 1.5%. Hardly worth reporting.

In any case, we all know how little it takes to sideline a truck – sometimes the defects aren't even remotely related to the propensity for calamity.

Three minor violations are sufficient to put a truck out-of-service. Usually, repairs are made at roadside and the truck is on its way again.

Sadly, the media doesn't differentiate between a grossly deficient truck and a truck with a couple of burned out lights. To the media – based on reports from inspectors – every truck taken out-of-service is an accident looking for a place to happen.

If you try to pin down MTO with a question about targeted versus random blitzes, they'll tell you that random actions are a way of getting a snapshot of the general condition of the trucks on the road. That's crap, in my opinion. No way can you get a statistically valid picture of the province's entire fleet by inspecting a few dozen trucks in a Toronto suburb.

If the MTO had computers that worked, maybe they wouldn't need blitzes to help them develop that elusive industry snapshot.

But then, as Ontario's Auditor General pointed out in a recent audit of MTO's commercial vehicle enforcement regime, the computers they use are so slow they can't pull up data fast enough to check a carrier's safety rating as the truck creeps past the shack in the scale lane.

At the end of the day, what value is an industry snapshot anyway? It's not even clear what the connection is between out-of-service rates and road safety. I'm far more interested in getting the non-compliant carriers and their scabby trucks off the road so the law-biding carriers can compete on a level playing field.

For my money, a far more effective compliance tool is a facility audit, which most jurisdictions require for operators with high safety violation rates.

Perhaps if Ontario had spent less last year on roadside blitzes, they would have been able to carry out the facility audits they were forced to cancel due to lack of funding.

Maybe it's time for MTO and all the other jurisdictions in North America to put an end to these self-serving publicity stunts and get serious about separating out the good operators from the bad. We'd all get a bigger bang for our buck, and we might actually achieve safer highways rather than just scaring the hell out of the motoring public. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Got a beef about blitzes? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll-free 888-794-9990.

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	No. of Off-Road Vehicles _____

2) Does this location operate, control or administer one or more vehicles in any of the following Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) categories? Please check YES or NO:

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11,794-14,968 kg. (26,001-33,000 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
8,846-11,793 kg. (19,501-26,000 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Under 4,536 kg. (10,000 lbs.).....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

3) This location operates, controls or administers:

Diesel powered vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Refrigerated vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Pickups or Utility Vans.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Propane powered vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

4) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location? YES NO
 IF YES, do you employ mechanics?..... YES NO

5) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:

a) <input type="checkbox"/> For Hire/Contract Trucking (hauling for others)
b) <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/Rental
c) <input type="checkbox"/> Food Production / Distribution / Beverages
d) <input type="checkbox"/> Farming
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i) <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing / Processing
ji) <input type="checkbox"/> Retail
k) <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale
l) <input type="checkbox"/> Logging / Lumber
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n) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____

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Logging

Traffic continues to increase on B.C. forest roads

Continued from page 1

roads, which often include steep grades, tight corners, unstable surfaces and narrow routes, all of which makes passing a challenge. Communication is also a concern on these back roads.

"They need radios to safely move back and forth, with the big trucks at least," Arcand says. "You can't pass two big trucks safely."

Maintenance standards fluctuate wildly on forestry roads. When logging has been inactive for some time, Arcand is worried about the up-keep and safety of those roads. After a slide occurred last year on Hwy. 16 near Terrace, commercial traffic was diverted through a logging road that hadn't been used for eight years. The road couldn't sustain the weight of the first three trucks that carried supplies to local communities which had been cut off from the slide, according to Arcand. "A couple of them flopped over, but no-one was hurt."

Because of the increasing traffic on resource roads, the use of various radio channels has created confusion over communications. Arcand recalls a tragic incident where a fully-loaded log truck topped a hill near Burns Lake and collided with another logging truck coming from the other direction, as

a result of confusion on the radios. One driver was left dead.

However, one of the greatest challenges for log haulers who drive in the bush is burgeoning tourism, a thriving off-road activity that includes recreational vehicles (RVs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles and hunters.

Arcand says frequently, a tourist-driven RV travelling on a resource road comes head-to-head with a logging truck on a single-lane gravel road.

"There is no room to pass, and then these people often don't know how to back up those things. I've heard numerous stories where the log trucker has managed to pull his truck to a stop, and back the motor home down for the guy, because he didn't know how to do it," she says.

Arcand recalls a fatal collision between a logging truck and a snowmobile that occurred about two years ago near Vanderhoof. At that time a 13-year-old boy driving a snowmobile popped out of a ditch and ran under the wheels of the truck, unbeknownst to the trucker.

"It was the snowmobiler's fault," she says of the sad event that affected the entire community.

The forest safety director has also heard about snowmobilers who simply abandon tow vehicles

in the middle of a resource road after finding ideal conditions for sledding.

"The sledders took off, because they unloaded thinking it was smooth there," she says. "This loaded truck came down. Where the heck was he supposed to go? The road was blocked."

Hunters on ATVs in the back woods are another serious concern to those who drive and work in the forestry industry. Arcand describes a sad incident that happened near Prince George, about two years ago where two hunters on ATVs collided with a logging truck. It was a collision barely noticed by the truck driver, until he stepped out of the truck.

"He looked, and there are two dead bodies," she says. "They hit the back axle of his trailer."

Even Arcand has felt threatened in the woods because of an unfriendly encounter with "road hunters," another illegal activity that is difficult to control in remote areas. In this case, Arcand and her husband came across two men who were obviously drinking, carrying loaded guns and tracking game. The hunters became angry and complained that the B.C. Forest Safety Council truck might spook the deer they had been following.

"For me, it wasn't about spooking the deer. It was about spooking these idiots with the guns standing in the middle in the road."

Despite the many hazards faced by log truckers, Arcand says the safety record is much better now than it was three years ago – before the B.C. Forest Safety Council was established. She says there were 15 truckers (statistics that include 'people going to work'), killed in 2005. There were nine in 2006; none in 2007, and three in 2008 with one from the latter 'going to work' category – which was a female tree planter who was thrown from a truck. "Four of the five of them had their seatbelts on," says Arcand. "She didn't. She got thrown out and killed."

Even with the challenges – the danger, frustration and the expense of a potential collision in the woods – many log haulers are committed to their livelihood.

"They care about the environment and they love what they do," says Arcand. "They could go and drive mining trucks for a lot more money, but they don't want to do that. They love the forests and they love being near the communities. They love being by their families and they're just super good people. They deserve some help." □

The road less travelled: Spectacular forestry road takes form

By Jan Westell

CAMPBELL RIVER, B.C. – It's been the topic of conversation amongst many resource operators who ply their trade on the north-west coast of Vancouver Island, where a spectacular 4-km logging road is being built on the southern edge of Kyuquot Sound, at a cost of \$1.5 million.

Yet the costs are expected to be far surpassed by lucrative timber sales from this isolated wilderness, according to B.C. Timber Sales (BCTS), a B.C. government agency with a mandate to set the cost and price benchmark for timber harvested from public land in B.C.

The one-way Soatwoon Lake Road Project is being built on a peninsula that is about two kilometres wide by five kilometres long – a timbered area located near Fair Harbour, and previously thought to be inaccessible. The planning for this project took about two years, with safety a priority. Therefore, intensive engineering work was required to find a location with acceptable grades on suitable terrain, according to Dan Lake, the engineering technician in charge of the project for BCTS.

"The landscape is steep and complex, resulting in road grades of up to 24%," says Lake of a project now in its fifteenth month, a delay caused mostly by terrain challenges. "The road gains approximately 420 metres in three kilometres, and crosses side slopes averaging 70-90%, with five switchbacks. In addition, two sections required stabilized rock fills up to 20 metres high, and three sections required rock cuts up to 10 metres high."

The greatest obstacle faced by the project, however, was the construction of three engineered structures. One rock gully was crossed with a geo-synthetic reinforced soil structure (retaining wall), and two large gully/stream crossings had to be stabilized with large boulders.

While the area had a sufficient supply of rock suitable for road building purposes, the material wasn't strong enough for construction of the gully crossings.

Consequently, the crew had to seek harder rock elsewhere for the required fill. In the end, about 15,000 cubic metres of rock was hauled over 1,000 metres, resulting in frequent truck trips. It was a tedious undertaking, according to Lake, considering the haul was uphill on grades up to 22%, and limited to two trucks.

"That was something that slowed us down and really increased the price. There were sections there, where it took us two months to go 300 metres, or in that realm," he says.

Most of the time there were only three crew members: an excavator operator, a driller, and a truck driver. When required, there were two excavators and two rock trucks and a drill.

"Sometimes there were three or four guys running those five pieces of equipment," says Lake. "It was a great benefit to have operators that had the experience and skills required to run all of the different types of equipment."

However, the project did experience some excellent luck. Lake hired a reliable and experienced monitoring contractor that kept the project operating smoothly and effi-



A ROAD TO SOMEWHERE: When finished, this forestry road will provide loggers and truckers with access to a gold mine of timber.

ciently. The crew was blessed with excellent weather, so fine that the construction wasn't interrupted during last year's winter months when work could proceed at a lower elevation. The project was only interrupted once for snow, and two days due to rain and wind. And while the area can be prone to heavy rainfall, the terrain is resilient to precipitation. "There's lots of rock," says Lake. "There are not a lot of deep soils out there, so it drains well and the road holds up well."

Furthermore, stumpage revenues from a preliminary timber sale which was logged following the initial phase of road construction, far exceeded expectations.

"It covered most of our costs," says Lake. "I was expecting a good return for that block, but I wasn't expecting what we got."

BCTS expects to sell approximately 125,000 cubic metres of high-quality timber from this development, which has already proven to be profitable in the early stages. □

Logging

B.C. gets tough on forest road speed demons

By Jan Westell

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – Considering the vast distance of B.C. forest roads, with a total of 59,000 kms, many B.C. log truckers are doubtful about a provincial speed clampdown on isolated service roads.

The B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range announced earlier this year that it was purchasing six new radar guns, for a total of 10, to monitor and enforce speed limits on all provincial forest service roads. The plan met with some skepticism from Roy Nagel, former executive director of the Central Interior Logging Association (CILA).

“I don’t think this makes much difference, really,” said Nagel. “We’re talking about six more radar guns for the whole province. So, when you think about it that way, there may be somebody from the ministry that shows up with a radar gun on the road in the region – or maybe not. We don’t know. But in any case, the vast majority of these guys are driving within the rules, so it shouldn’t really make much difference.”

However, even the perception of a higher level of speed enforcement may contribute to the overall safety of driving in the bush, according to Nagel.

“Simply the word getting out is likely a good thing, as far as those few that are speeding, or are inclined to speed. It may cause them to be a little more cautious and slow down some.”

Nagel suggested the volume that’s



MORE ENFORCEMENT: Ministry of Forests workers will be enforcing logging road speeds with radar guns in hopes of avoiding accidents.

been harvested this year and last, compared with previous years, is “way, way down.” Therefore the number of trucks on forestry roads is reduced and the amount of hauling is reduced, all of which takes the pressure off the average truck logger, he added.

“All in all, it is a much more sedate pace of logging and hauling right now.”

CILA was a founding member of the B.C. Forest Safety Council and Nagel said the organization has supported the many safety initiatives that came out of that organization. It’s a mindset that has been endorsed by most of those who work in the forestry industry, according to the former director. “You have to watch the odd maverick that doesn’t do it right, but by and large these people have gotten the message.”

The director of B.C.’s Forestry

TruckSafe Program and Northern Initiatives agreed with Nagel on this topic. MaryAnne Arcand believes logging truck drivers are much more aware of safety and driving on forest roads than they were a few years ago.

“Several areas of the province have a company-appointed ‘road marshal’ who has been enforcing the company’s rules of the road, using contractual and financial penalties as their ‘teeth,’ since they have no legal authority to stop speeders and other offenders,” she explained.

However, speed is still a major issue on forest roads she added, but not so much with logging trucks, but rather other road users, primarily in pick-up trucks. Part of the challenge is that the Ministry of Forests enforcement policies only apply to Forest Service Roads, a small portion of the 400,000 kms of total re-

source roads in the province. So, in essence the enforcement isn’t broad enough and doesn’t cover all the roads, she explained.

“But this initiative is a good start. It has certainly raised the awareness of forest road users, and has busted the myth that there are no rules on the forest roads of B.C. It is not the ‘Wild West’ out there.”

Previously, speed enforcement tended to be localized and focused on high-risk, high-traffic roads. However, Ministry compliance and enforcement officers will now practice speed enforcement on a daily basis, province-wide with the use of the 10 radar guns.

“Expanding the use of radar guns is another step toward improving safety for forest workers and the public,” said Forests and Range Minister Pat Bell, in a press release when the announcement was first made earlier this year.

The Ministry also plans to place three speed boards – one per region – in different locations around the province to increase driver’s awareness of speed.

“Initially, the main focus is to improve compliance and safe driving practices through education and awareness,” said Bell. “But make no mistake, officers are empowered to give tickets and chronic, repeat offenders could be subject to fines of up to \$1 million for speeding and dangerous driving on a Forest Service road.”

The maximum speed limit on B.C. forest service roads is either as posted or 80 km/h. □

Feature

Economic woes, job losses drive more people to trucking

By Jan Westell

CASTLEGAR, B.C. – As a former boom boat operator who worked for the deteriorating forestry industry, Paul Laurence is looking forward to changing careers. He’s chosen the trucking industry, which is an occupation that he is hoping will offer a more comfortable work environment and steady employment.

When Laurence was scoping out top professional driving schools in B.C., he decided on Mountain Transport Institute (MTI), located in Castlegar.

Since the MTI program requires a 12-week commitment, Laurence had to seek out extended lodging in the area, which also meant infrequent visits home to his family on the west coast. Yet, Laurence is not complaining, and seems to be enjoying the experience.

“I’m staying at a little cabin on the Columbia River that I rented from a lady and her husband,” he says. “It’s not my house at home or anything, but as a bachelor it works.”

This isn’t the first time Laurence has had to switch careers. Before he started working for the forestry industry, he was a commercial fisherman – a once lucrative profession that has suffered from dwindling stocks. Therefore, working independently as a trucker is expected to be an easy fit. Laurence also ex-

pects that he’ll appreciate the warm environment of a cab, compared to the all-weather exposure of a bare-bones vessel like a four-metre boom boat. However, the driver-in-training admits that the full reality of his new profession remains a question. “Honestly, I don’t really know, until I actually get out there and do it.”

Andy Roberts, president of MTI says it’s not unusual to meet students who have switched to trucking from industries like forestry.

“Professional driving is a sector that is relatively quick to get into, with an ability to earn good money right out of school,” says Roberts. “The challenge that we see, is that quite often individuals are choosing trucking for the money only, and not because they really want to drive.”

The head of the Professional Driver Certificate Program for Red Deer College in Alberta, has noticed an unusual upswing in enrollment recently, much of which is resulting from students who are switching careers due to economic pressures facing retail and sales positions or as a result of corporate downsizing. “We have had a tremendous interest in the program as well as phone calls from people that are looking for alternatives,” says Ric Bolton, who indicates that the school is also getting

a great deal of interest from applicants who live outside of Alberta – from as far away as Halifax, Inuvik, and Ontario.

Business is so good for the Alberta professional driving school that it has had to turn about 15 students away last month, and create a waiting list for about 40 people who want to enroll in the next 85-hour course. And despite the economy, Bolton said there are still jobs in the trucking industry.

“Fifty per cent of the students right now have been offered jobs from carriers,” he says.

Linda Gauthier, executive director of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council has heard of a range of employment situations in talks with various companies that have operations across the country: some are hiring, some are not hiring, and others



SECOND CAREER: Paul Laurence turned to trucking after jobs in the forestry industry dried up.

are laying employees off.

“So, we can’t blanket across the country, to say nobody is hiring. That’s not true. Some people are hiring and I think it’s a question of where there’s movement, and where the economy is starting to pick up,” she said. □

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So, how do you spell tires with high value? H-A-N-K-O-O-K



Tame the Road



SCR vs. EGR war heats up at Mid-America

By James Menzies

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – It was a rare sight: the CEOs of four major engine manufacturers sitting side-by-side on a panel and nodding in agreement as each of the others spoke. The scene was the *SCR for 2010 – CEO Summit*, hosted by the FactsAboutSCR.com and the SCR Stakeholders Group at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

Included on the panel were: Chris Patterson, CEO of Daimler Trucks North America; Per Carlsson, CEO of Volvo Trucks North America; Denny Slagle, CEO of Mack Trucks; and Jim Kelly, president of the engine business for Cummins.

They were there to extol the virtues of selective catalytic reduction (SCR), the technology each of their respective companies will employ to meet EPA2010 emissions

standards.

Noticeably absent was Navistar, which is the lone hold-out remaining in the EGR-only camp. Navistar has been critical of SCR and stands alone in its pursuit of an in-cylinder solution that doesn't require exhaust aftertreatment.

Also on the panel were: Byron Bunker of the EPA; Bill Mulligan of Pilot Travel Centers; Tom O'Brien, TA TravelCenters of America/Petro Stopping Centers; and Barry Lonsdale of diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) producer, Terra Environmental Technologies.

They brushed aside concerns about the availability of DEF – the urea-based essential ingredient required by SCR systems – by promising to have the fluid widely available before Jan. 1, 2010. Mulligan said Pilot will be taking delivery of DEF

dispensing equipment beginning in the second quarter and will also sell pre-packaged quantities at each of its truck stops by December. O'Brien added his truck stop chain will have DEF available at-the-pump and in pre-packaged containers with emergency fills available through the company's fleet of more than 400 roadside service trucks.

For his part, Terra's Lonsdale dispelled rumours about the toxic nature of DEF, pointing out it is not considered a hazardous material by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

It was the engine CEOs, however, that had the strongest words about SCR and the alternative in-cylinder solution being developed by Navistar.

"It strikes me as I sit here that even though we represent a very sig-

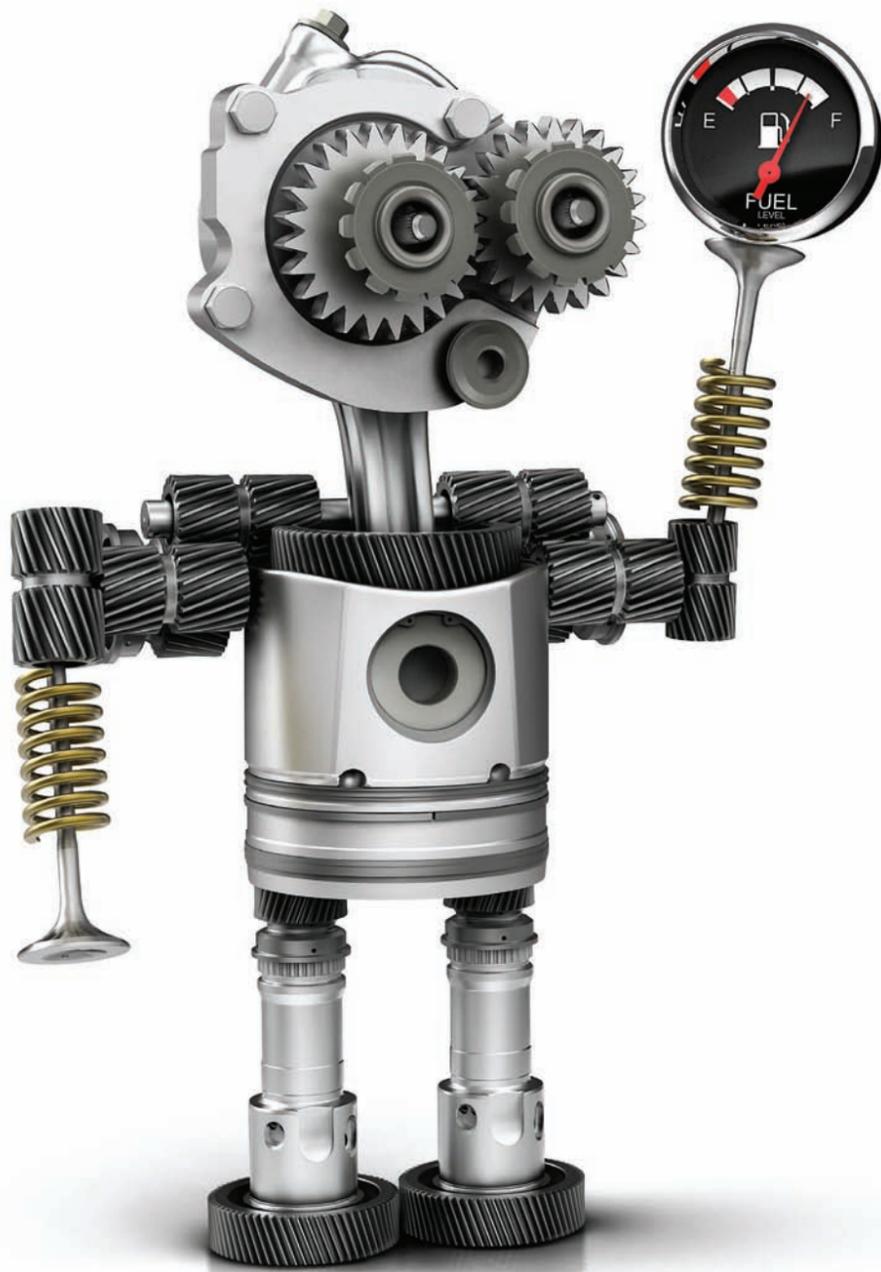
nificant percentage of the world's heavy-duty engine and truck production, we must not be very good leaders," chided Volvo's Carlsson. "And the thousands of engineers working for us around the globe must not be very bright, because we've selected SCR for EPA2010. And according to the sole adopter of massive EGR, we've all made the wrong choice."

He urged a packed room to ignore the anti-SCR claims of a "regional manufacturer" that's "making its first entry into the heavy-duty engine business."

Mack's Slagle pointed out all the engine manufacturers represented on the panel have their own EGR experiences.

"We use EGR today. We know it puts additional stress on an engine," he said. "We know it generates a lot

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of heat, even at today's levels. We know it presents challenges when it comes to engine performance and fuel economy. We're managing all of this extraordinarily well today, but we've reached the limit of what can be accomplished with EGR." Daimler Trucks North America's Patterson pointed out "This may be the only time you see the world's three largest producers of heavy-duty diesel engines in violent agreement about anything."

He suggested focusing on the benefits of SCR, including fuel economy improvements of about 5%. (Each of the engine OEMs represented cited similar fuel economy gains will be achieved with their versions of SCR).

Since Navistar was not invited to participate on the panel, *Truck West* tracked down Tim Shick, director of marketing with Navistar's engine group for a response.

He said Navistar is more confident than ever that it has made the right choice by carving its own path.

"The more we get into this, the more confident we are," he insisted.

Navistar will use emissions credits to slowly work its way down to the EPA2010 NOx limit of 0.2 g/bhp-hr,

beginning at a level of 0.5 grams on Jan. 1, 2010.

When asked for an explanation on how Navistar will meet the 0.2 g NOx limit once its emissions credits run out (expected to occur sometime in 2012), Shick said "If you put enough exhaust gas back into an engine, you can reach just about any level of NOx you want – that's not the challenge."

He continued: "The challenge at that level is to retain good performance, fuel economy and durability. And the way we ensure that is, every time we take the EGR rate up in the series of steps we're making to the final 0.2 g emissions engine, we also take the fuel pressure up. We recalibrate to make sure that all those ingredients in the mix are optimized, and so far we've seen in the lab and we have trucks on the road today that show it definitely can be done, we are doing it and we will bring it out...the key to it is that high pressure common rail fuel system, that's



STICKING WITH SCR: Cummins was one of the OEMs on a panel that touted the benefits of SCR at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

the magic ingredient."

Back at the SCR Summit, Slagle urged everyone to do their due diligence when selecting an engine technology for 2010.

"Our message to customers is 'do your homework,'" he suggested. "Become educated about both SCR and massive EGR so that you can make an informed decision." □

Volvo says 'so long' to active re-gens

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Volvo Trucks North America announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show that it will no longer require active diesel particulate filter (DPF) regenerations on its 2010 engines with selective catalytic reduction (SCR).

In extensive field testing, engineers have noted highway trucks with Volvo's 2010 engines and SCR have been able to regenerate passively 100% of the time. That's significant, because active regenerations require a dose of diesel fuel. Ed Saxman, drivetrain product manager with Volvo Trucks North America, said the ability to regenerate the DPF passively each and every time is another compelling reason to embrace SCR in 2010.

In vocational applications, Volvo is touting "near zero" active re-gens. It will continue collecting data before declaring it has completely eliminated active regenerations on vocational trucks.

Volvo is the first truck maker to lay claim to completely eliminating active DPF regenerations. It felt confident in doing so after collecting millions of miles of real-world testing data without a single active regeneration.

Saxman explained that NOx plays a vital role in facilitating passive DPF regenerations. Since Volvo is eliminating NOx downstream in the SCR catalyst, it can allow the optimum amount of NOx to leave the engine cylinder, improving DPF regeneration efficiency. Passive regenerations occur at about 500 F, according to Saxman, while active regenerations occur at significantly higher temperatures and require a burst of fuel. □

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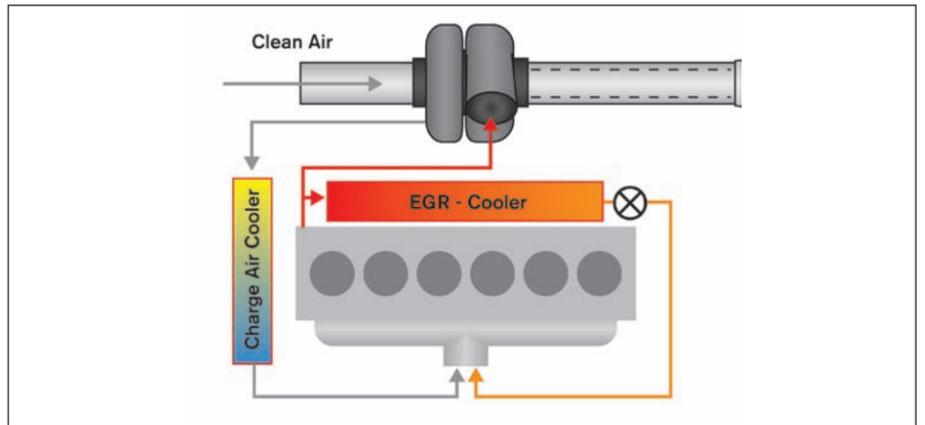
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EGR ONLY: Navistar is touting its in-cylinder solution, which consists of increased levels of EGR, as the simplest solution for EPA2010 compliance.

Navistar assails “truly nutty” SCR

By Lou Smyrlis

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Navistar has added yet a few more logs to the firestorm of controversy over what’s the best approach to take to meet the 2010 engine emissions mandate. Speaking before customers, dealers and the media at

an exclusive night event at the Mid-America Trucking Show, the Canadian market share leader in Class 8 truck sales not only defended its decision to be the only truck maker staying the course in meeting the 2010 emissions with EGR technology, it came out swinging.

Dee Kapur, president, Navistar Truck Group, has been a vocal critic of SCR and he didn’t hold back, calling it “the truly nutty” alternative that asks truck buyers to deal with the “toxic agent” of urea.

Jack Allen, president of Navistar’s North American Truck Group, outlined the reasoning behind International’s approach, which it calls advanced EGR. Allen said advanced EGR makes it easier for customers.

He said SCR technology adds weight and five new components to gain compliance with emissions standards.

He added that Navistar’s approach, which relies in part on credits gained earlier when International engine designs exceeded government standards, is the better way to go.

“When our competitors complain about those credits, it’s really just sour grapes,” he said.

Allen also questioned the environmental and operational impact of having to use urea with the SCR alternative. He said urea is going to prove expensive, using a figure of \$35 a gallon.

“Even in Europe (which has greater experience with urea) it’s \$12 a gallon,” he said. “Some of our competitors will tell you ‘no way will urea cost that much’...ask them for the proof.”

He also repeated claims that urea breaks down at temperature extremes and “turns into a toxic ammonia gas.”

“It begs the question, do you really want to deal with this stuff?” he said.

He added that availability of urea may also be a problem, arguing that even if 500 locations initially offer urea across the US, that’s a small portion of the 35,000 diesel locations across the country. Allen characterized International’s decision to stick with EGR rather than switch to SCR technology as forward thinking.

“When we look to the future, we are pretty sure it won’t be urea-based,” he said. “What’s going to happen, do you think, to the resale value of all the SCR-equipped trucks?” □



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Cummins offers insight into reasons for switch to SCR

By James Menzies
LOUISVILLE, Ky. – When Cummins shocked the industry last August by announcing it was abandoning its plans to achieve EPA2010 compliance using an in-cylinder solution in favour of selective catalytic reduction (SCR), few reasons for the switch were provided.

At the time, Cummins officials said they were making the u-turn based on the discovery of a new copper zeolite catalyst material that made significant fuel economy improvements attainable using SCR, but it also said its in-cylinder solution was on-schedule and achievable.

At a press event at Louisville distributor Cummins Crosspoint preceding the Mid-America Trucking Show, the company revealed further details about why it had a sudden change of heart. The main reason for the switch remains the potential performance advantages of copper zeolite as a catalyst material, according to Steve Charlton, vice-president of heavy-duty engineering with Cummins. He explained the newly-discovered alternative has a NOx efficiency rate (the percentage of NOx removed by the catalyst) of more than 90%. That compares to an 85% conversion rate of traditional catalyst materials, he said, meaning the company will be able to program its engines for even greater performance and fuel economy.

Adding to copper zeolite's appeal, Charlton explained the material maintains its performance at extremely high temperatures as well as at the bottom end of the temperature range. Suddenly, the advent of copper zeolite put SCR in a much more favourable light, according to Cummins.

Meanwhile, Charlton also revealed the company was facing considerable challenges in achieving its in-cylinder solution.

"The in-cylinder solution is definitely not without its challenges," he said. "I believe we would have gotten there, but there were some stiff challenges."

With EGR rates being ramped up from 25-30% in 2007 to about 45% for 2010, Charlton said Cummins struggled to maintain its current fuel consumption rates. He also pointed out that at such high volumes, the exhaust gas recirculated back into the cylinder contains water which runs the risk of condensing.

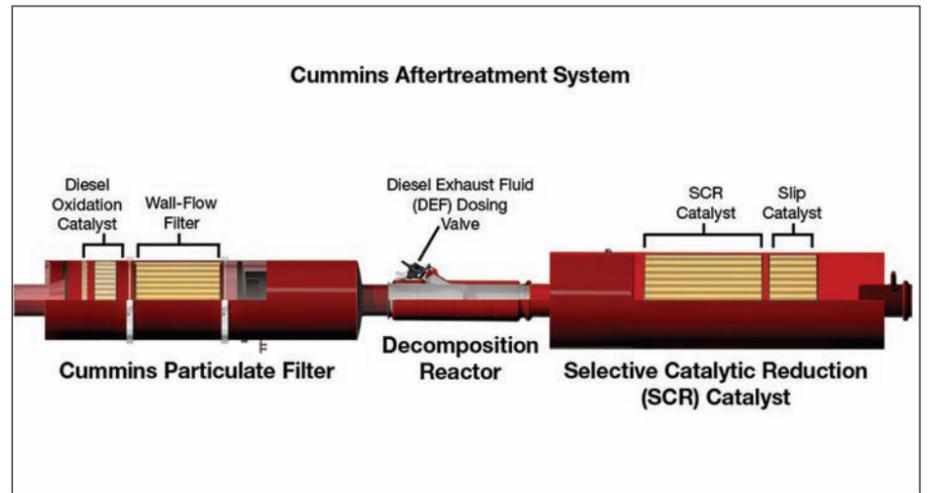
"Where does all this condensate go? It can go down past the piston ring and find its way into the cylinder," he explained. He also noted the diesel particulate filter (DPF) was being overworked due to the high EGR rates, requiring more active regenerations and further hindering fuel economy.

Power density and torque were also being compromised during development of its in-cylinder solution, Charlton pointed out, necessitating the launch of a higher displacement engine. In fact, by adopting SCR, the company has abandoned plans to introduce a 16-litre ISX, since it can achieve

the same performance with a 15-litre offering.

Charlton said Cummins found there was a 9% fuel economy swing between what it can achieve using SCR compared to what it was on pace to realize if it forged ahead with its in-cylinder solution. Even with a DEF penalty of about 2%, he said the fuel savings were too great to ignore, thus the decision was made to change paths.

Jim Kelly, president of Cummins engine business, added "We did make a bit of a right hand turn in August of last year...we felt that consistent with our commitment to our customer base in having the right technology in the right market at the right time, that we needed to make that change with the development of the copper zeolite material."



THE BETTER WAY?: Cummins explained its reasons for switching to SCR at a press event prior to the Mid-America Trucking Show.

He also addressed EPA concerns about the possibility copper zeolite could produce toxins, and was confident the EPA's worries will be put to rest.

"We believe there's no public harm associated with copper zeolite and we believe it will in fact be approved and be our technology going forward," he said. □



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Mack declares readiness for 2010

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Mack Trucks announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show that it has conducted extensive field testing of its EPA2010-compliant engines and is ready for roll-out.

Mack's engines will use selective catalytic reduction (SCR) in 2010, which is performing well with test fleets, according to the company. Mack officials showed videos of customer testimonials during a press luncheon at the show.

"Mack is ready for 2010 and we have complete confidence in our SCR technology and its ability to deliver increased fuel economy and lower operational costs for our customers, especially when compared with other approaches to 2010," said Denny Slagle, Mack president and CEO. "Ultimately, the performance and efficiency debate on technology will be decided on the road. This is where Mack will shine."

Slagle added "We're well ahead of where we were in 2007."

David McKenna, director of powertrain sales and marketing with Mack, said real-world field testing has shown Mack's 2010 engines virtually eliminate the need for active regenerations of the

diesel particulate filter (DPF).

"Since we use SCR to remove NOx from the exhaust downstream from the DPF, we are able to tune the engine to produce better performance and fuel economy, while using the NOx in the exhaust to passively regenerate the DPF," he explained. "We're making simple chemistry work in our favour."

McKenna insisted SCR will deliver a lower cost of ownership when compared to an in-cylinder solution he terms "massive EGR."

He showed spreadsheets that indicated a Class 8 truck with SCR will typically cost nearly US\$1,100

less to operate versus a comparable truck using only EGR.

That's based on diesel prices of \$2.33/gallon and DEF priced at \$1.75/gallon, running 100,000 miles and averaging 6 mpg. When bumping diesel prices to \$3/gallon and DEF prices to \$2.25, the savings totals more than US\$1,300 per 100,000 miles, according to McKenna.

While Mack Trucks didn't provide a purchase price for 2010 trucks and engines, Slagle did say it will likely be "in the same ballpark" as Volvo's recently-announced emissions surcharge of US\$9,600. □

'We're making simple chemistry work in our favour.'

David McKenna

Cummins showcases 2010 engine line-up

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Improved fuel economy, performance and reliability over today's engines were all promised by Cummins when it unveiled its 2010 engine line-up in advance of the Mid-America Trucking Show.

The 2010 engines – including a new ISX15 and ISX11.9 – will all use selective catalytic reduction (SCR) in 2010. They'll also use Cummins XPI fuel system, an enhanced cooled EGR system and a single variable geometry turbocharger, in addition to the SCR system. Cummins will use a copper zeolite material within the SCR catalyst, which it says offers a greater NOx efficiency rate than the more commonly-used iron zeolite alternative.

Cummins officials said the ISX15 will be up to 5% more fuel efficient than today's engines and up to 9% better than the in-cylinder solution the company was initially pursuing. It reversed paths last August upon discovering that further fuel efficiency gains could be achieved using the recently-discovered copper zeolite, the company explained.

The ISX15 will be available with 400-600 hp and torque output of 1,450-2,050 lb.-ft. When Cummins made the switch to SCR, it scrapped plans to develop a 16-litre ISX because it found it could achieve the same performance with a lower displacement engine, Steve Charlton, vice-president of heavy-duty engineering, explained.

The ISX11.9 will share many common parts with its bigger brother, such as the EGR system, variable geometry turbo and XPI fuel system. Cummins said it's a lightweight medium-bore engine ideal for vocational trucks, day cabs and emergency vehicles. It will come with 310-425 hp and 1,150-1,650 lb.-ft. of torque.

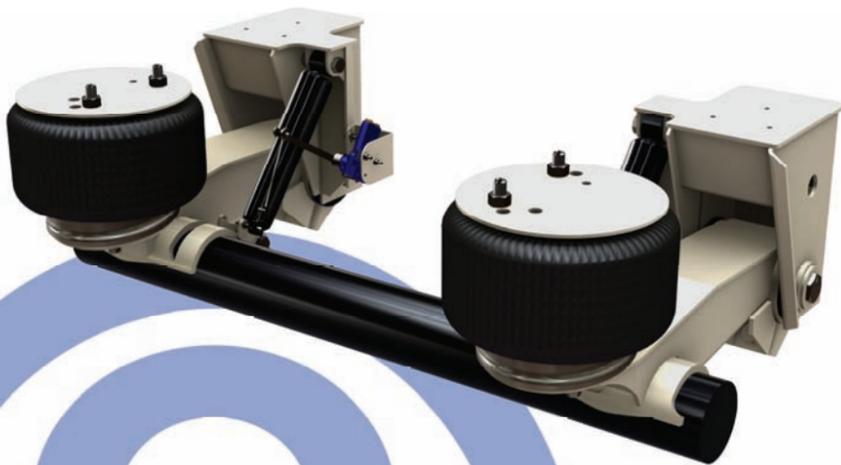
"Customers can count on our engines to be even better in 2010 in every regard," vowed Charlton. "Our heavy-duty engines for 2010 have a large 'sweet spot' due to the low-temperature NOx conversion capability of the copper zeolite catalyst, which means that these engines are extraordinarily driver-friendly. Fuel economy gains can be realized with even the most inexperienced driver and, at the same time, the engines deliver performance that the driver will love."

Cummins also unveiled its 2010 mid-range engine line, which doesn't vary much from current designs except for the addition of the SCR system. Mid-range offerings include: The ISB6.7 with 200-325 hp and 520-750 lb.-ft. of torque; the ISC8.3 with 260-350 hp and 660-1,000 lb.-ft. of torque; and the ISL9 with 345-380 hp and 1,150-1,300 lb.-ft. of torque.

"With the use of SCR, we're able to tune the combustion recipe in the engine to dramatically reduce diesel particulate filter regeneration," explained Jim Cramer, 2010 ISB technical program leader. "That means less fuel and greater simplicity in operations for our customers." □

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Detroit Diesel introduces DD16

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Detroit Diesel introduced what it's dubbing its most powerful and robust engine at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

The DD16 will be available in 2010 with Daimler's BlueTec emissions technology utilizing selective catalytic reduction (SCR), the company announced.

The new offering displaces 15.6 litres and will be marketed to owner/operators and companies involved in heavy-haul applications, as well as small fleets.

Like the DD15, the new engine will feature turbo compounding, which captures previously wasted exhaust gas energy and converts it to useful power, according to the company. The DD16 will be offered with between 475 and 600 hp with torque ratings ranging from 1,750 to 2,050 lb.-ft.

"The DD16 is ideal for small fleets and owner/operators who demand more from their engines than ever available before from Detroit Diesel," said David Siler, director of marketing for Detroit Diesel. "We're confident that the DD16 will exceed expectations in even the most extreme applications."

Detroit Diesel says its newest engine will boast a long, flat torque curve peaking at 1,100 RPM to provide excellent pulling power on steep grades.

"Extreme environments such as mountains and coal mines can take a major toll on engines," said Admir Kreso, director, HDEP Engineering for Detroit Diesel. "The DD16 not



MORE POWER: Detroit Diesel's DD16 is its most powerful and robust engine, the company claims.

only excels in these conditions, but in long-haul applications it boasts durability already proven by the DD15 engine."

Because of its ability to handle rigorous applications, the engine will be a good fit for Western Star trucks, according to the company. It will offer it in the 4900 Series in March, 2010 and the 6900 in July, 2010.

"The powerful DD16 will provide Western Star customers with yet another engine choice to tackle the most challenging jobs in the most extreme environments," said Richard Shearing, senior manager of product strategy for Western Star. "Not only does the DD16 feature superior durability that will result in less engine wear-and-tear, it's backed by Detroit Diesel's proven engine technology."

Freightliner trucks will be available with the DD16 beginning in March, 2010. □

Navistar showcases 15-litre MaxxForce

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Trucking industry journalists and dealers were given the first taste of a working version of Navistar’s MaxxForce 15-litre engine, the first fruit from the truck maker’s partnership with Caterpillar.

The engine will provide Navistar truck buyers with more power than is currently available with the MaxxForce 13 engine. It will be offered with a 435-550 hp range.

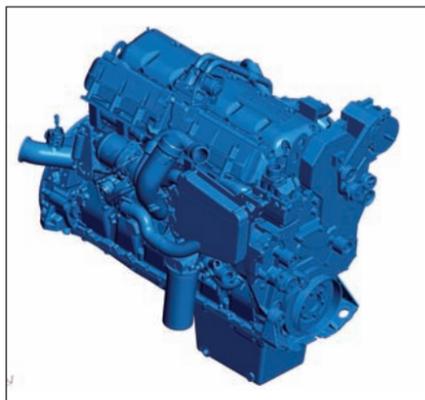
The engine will have a 15.2 litre displacement, a twin turbocharger with intercooling and aftercooling and will sport a direct injection fuel system based on Navistar’s MaxxForce technology.

There will be plenty of torque for the heavy jobs, ranging from 1,550-1,850 lb.-ft.

“Our competitors said it would take years. Well, here it is,” Navistar’s Jim Hebe said as the 15-litre diesel was shown in a shiny new ProStar and the ignition was turned on at the company’s splashy press conference in Louisville. “We are now the most vertically-integrated truck manufacturer in North America.”

The engine will be available for purchase in 2010.

Well-known engine maker Caterpillar shocked the industry last year when it announced it would not develop a heavy-duty truck engine that would meet the 2010 emissions standards and that it was exiting the truck market.



SNEAK PEAK: Navistar offered a preview of what its 15-litre MaxxForce will look like.

However, Caterpillar did not completely exit the market. It further shocked the industry when it struck a deal with Navistar to work on producing a severe-service truck under the Caterpillar brand as well as collaborating on other “unspecified projects.”

The 15-litre engine just unveiled is the first of those “unspecified projects.”

The 15-litre MaxxForce engine is a combination of Caterpillar’s C15 engine block and architecture with Navistar’s own fuel and emissions systems. And like Navistar’s other diesel-power offerings, the new 15-litre engine will rely only on EGR (exhaust gas recirculation) to meet the 2010 emission standards, rather than SCR (selective catalytic reduction) which all other engine manufacturers are turning to. □

Bendix promises boost with PBS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Bendix has taken its “first foray into the powertrain arena” with the introduction of a pneumatic booster system (PBS) designed to improve fuel economy and acceleration while reducing emissions.

Steve Mance, vice-president and general manager for Bendix’s charging business, said the PBS can reduce turbo lag by five seconds, cut fuel consumption by 2-5%, NOx emissions by 5% and particulate matter (PM) by as much as 25%.

Eventually, the company is hopeful customers can use PBS to downsize their engine requirements thanks to the performance improvements and move to smaller SCR and DPF systems, thanks to the reduction in emissions. PBS also eliminates the need for a second turbo in some applications.

The PBS unit is placed near the air intake manifold and monitors the controller area network (CAN) for specific signals, Bendix explained. When the system is activated, the PBS injects compressed air from the auxiliary air tank into the engine manifold, delivering the optimum amount of air for combustion and eliminating turbo lag.

“Bendix has long been known as a pioneer in commercial vehicle air treatment. We are using our core air management capabilities and expertise to go beyond the air brake system,” said Mance. “We have designed a completely new product that will greatly benefit



CLEAN BOOST: The PBS from Bendix represents the company’s first steps into the powertrain arena.

our customers and contribute to minimizing engine emissions.”

PBS is still undergoing internal validation, according to Bendix, but early testing has been encouraging. The company said it has found that a 7.8-litre engine with PBS has better overall performance than a typical 10-litre engine. Two models are currently available: the PBS 200 for 4- to 8-litre engines; and the PBS 400 designed for 8- to 13-litre engines.

“Bendix developed this technology to allow for a smaller engine with comparable engine and vehicle performance,” Mance said. “Ultimately, PBS will help address EPA emissions standards by improving fuel economy and minimizing emissions released into the environment. We developed this smart system to respond to changing global rules, while also delivering the most effective cost-competitive solution.” □

Cummins Filtration to have DEF on store shelves early

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Cummins Filtration has announced its Fleetguard Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) will be available through distributors across North America by Oct. 1, well in advance of the roll-out of 2010 engines with selective catalytic reduction (SCR).

“DEF will be widely available through all our Cummins distributor locations by October 1, 2009,”

announced Pamela Carter, president of Cummins Distribution.

Cummins Filtration has been selling DEF under the label StableGuard Urea since 2003. As of Oct. 1, its DEF will be available at more than 187 Cummins locations in North America as well as through the Cummins Filtration network of more than 20,000 locations, according to the company.

Currently, the solution is available in bulk, 330-gallon plastic totes and 275-gallon disposable totes as well as 55-gallon plastic drums. In mid-2009, smaller packages will also be available, the company said.

“Customer needs will vary based on consumption, fueling procedures and other factors. Cummins Filtration is committed to offering dependable DEF sup-

ply solutions to meet these different customer needs,” said KC Hall, director of diesel exhaust fluid business development.

“Cummins Filtration is fully committed to increasing DEF availability and knowledge in the marketplace by providing our customers with a full package of products, information and service options.” □

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Canada

By Carroll McCormick

CAMBRIDGE, Ont. – On March 17, an employee interrupted thieves in the act of stealing 30,000 litres of diesel fuel from Penske Truck Rentals in Cambridge, Ont. They abandoned a cube van outfitted with plastic tanks, electric pump and generator, according to staff sergeant Frank Sinko, Kitchener Detective Office of the Waterloo Regional Police.

Earlier thefts in the area netted hauls such as 12,000, 20,000 and 34,000 litres of diesel, and \$18,000, \$27,000 and \$50,000 worth of diesel.

“In the last few months we are seeing large-scale theft from underground storage containers,” Sinko says. “It is an organized, well-planned criminal activity. We are seeing a trend between here and the Greater Toronto Area.”

As for the wisdom that lower fuel prices have rendered fuel theft unattractive, Sinko says, “We thought we might see that, but the profit margins are so staggering.”

In Edmonton and surroundings there were hundreds of incidents last year, the majority of them at cardlocks, says detective Rob Bilawey, of the Edmonton Police Services southeast division. “These guys find one card that works, they get storage containers and they pump ’til the cards run dry or they run out of storage containers.”

Last July the B.C. Forest Safety Council issued an alert that thieves were “showing up” at overnight truck stops, long-term parking lots, work sites where there was unattended equipment and fuel storage tanks.

When reports of fuel thefts from carriers belonging to the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) started trickling in, APTA e-mailed members a heads-up.

“We have seen thefts anywhere from \$16,000 to \$30,000,” said APTA president Peter Nelson last September, adding that there were about a dozen reports of fuel theft, and probably lots more he hadn’t heard about.

APTA members had no desire to discuss their experiences with *Truck West*.

“The feedback I get is that nobody wants to draw attention to themselves or the steps they are taking to secure their assets. I think there was some embarrassment there. It is a confidence and trust issue,” Nelson reported. “The ones I’ve heard that were in the yards were cases where the trucks were broken into. The trucks were ransacked looking for PIN numbers.”

Corporal Mike Gaudet, with the Kodiak Regional RCMP in Moncton says only, “There were a few incidents in the Moncton area. There is nothing to alert an all-out task force or anything to that effect.”

Information was even scarcer at the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA). “We have heard stories,” said Rebecka Torn, communications director with OTA. “Anecdotally in situations with nothing related to the OTA theft committee, members have men-

Fuel theft

A dirty little secret thieves would probably like to keep that way

tioned that they have had fuel stolen. That said, I doubt they will want to be quoted in *Truck West* about it.”

The B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) said last fall that none of its members had reported any fuel thefts, that the BCTA didn’t report on it and it was not an issue.

However, Claude Robert, chief executive officer of Robert Transport in Boucherville, Que. was raring to talk about the problem.

“Fuel theft is all over the place. The question is, who is it *not* being stolen from? Sometimes our employees steal it, sometimes someone else. Some drivers sell it, others get it stolen. They do it when the drivers are having lunch, or with the cooperation of the drivers. We catch some. Tankers get stolen big time.”

The vast quantities of fuel being sucked from cardlocks is puzzling. After all, wouldn’t a single transaction big enough to fuel 10 or 20 trucks, or multiple purchases in different areas in one night trigger alarms, the slamming shut of gates, the raising of drawbridges?

“Cardlock thefts are completely preventable,” says Bilawey. “When we interview these (thieves) they invariably tell us that in the cabs they find sticky notes with PINs on the backs of the cards, PINs written on the

cards, or find random four-digit numbers, which they try at the cardlocks.”

Some fleets do not set daily purchase limits on their cards, which explains these astounding hauls. Yet, not only can credit limits be set, says Vicky Fontana-Vatcher, manager of fleet fuels with Suncor (while not admitting to any thefts from Suncor cardlocks), “Customers can access the Suncor card management system to change PIN numbers, pick and choose which locations drivers can fuel at.”

Chevron’s Web site informs readers, “You can customize each

card with purchase restrictions such as: volume limits, daily transaction limits, and time of day and day of week limits.”

“What a lot of carriers have done is put a daily limit on their fuel cards so you can’t rack up these kinds of numbers. The ideas of limits is starting to come into the mainstream,” Nelson reports.

One carrier contact, requesting anonymity, says, “Carriers have tightened security of the fuel cards, PINs, daily limits on cards, (started) programs to ensure fuel consumed per truck (company or owner/operator) is legit, trucks remain locked at all times, fuel caps have locks and yards with fuel

storage are secure.”

“I don’t think you can put more than 500 litres a day on our cards. It would be idiotic to put an open limit on a card,” Robert admonishes.

It is a simple matter for fleets with maintenance programs that monitor fuel mileage at the truck level to look for trucks with unusual fuel consumption. This could uncover drivers selling fuel on the side.

Robert says, “We keep telling our drivers of the precautions they need to take. Make sure that when you stop to sleep, that you stop in a safe area. But some drivers are careless.”

He adds, “We have put devices in our fuel tanks that prevent pumping. We can slow thieves down.”

Fighting diesel theft is about making thieves work harder for their paycheck.

“The only thing you can do is slow them down, create problems for them,” Robert says.

Thieves can be foiled other ways: “Some businesses are placing concrete barriers in the access paths after hours. Others, cameras and improvements in gates and fences,” says Sinko. Gaudet has some oft-overlooked advice: “It can only help to get the community involved. We have programs where we encourage people to be informed of the community and area, to be eyes and ears. I know what is normal in my area. Seeing a half-tonne truck at a commercial cardlock – if you don’t know that there is a theft going on, you are not even paying attention.”

Are victims depriving thieves of any big secrets by staying silent?

“I am of the opinion, as would be any police agency (to) give information on the facts of the thefts. Your best defense is a strong offence,” says Gaudet.

The Edmonton Police Services agonized over whether the thefts should be made public, Bilawey confides.

But he hopes, “At the end of the day we hope we are educating fleets and not thieves.”

Sinko does not equivocate: “Spread the word.” □

‘Fuel theft is all over the place. The question is, who is it *not* being stolen from?’

Claude Robert



WATCH THE NUMBERS: Track fuel consumption by truck to determine if there’s abuse in the system, experts advise.

Slick savings

How to reduce oil costs and still enjoy the benefits of a premium product

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Fleets are under constant pressure to reduce costs, but with heavy-duty engine oil (HDEO) representing only about 1.5-2% of a fleet's maintenance spend, it's an easy expenditure to overlook. However, there are worthwhile cost savings achievable by properly managing your fleet's oil program – and we're not talking about the short-sighted tactic of substituting a premium HDEO with a less expensive alternative.

"In the long run, a lower cost product can actually increase overall costs," warns Dan Arcy, OEM technical manager with Shell Lubricants.

So how do you go about trimming costs while also enjoying the benefits of a premium oil? It begins with using the right oil in the first place.

START WITH THE RIGHT OIL

For starters, buy a brand name product with the American Petroleum Institute (API) donut on the packaging. This ensures the oil meets stringent performance criteria established by the API.

"What some companies in the lower price range will do, is make statements like 'meets the requirements of CI-4 Plus or CJ-4,' and that's just marketing lingo," says Gary Parsons, global OEM and industry liaison manager, Chevron Oronite Company. "You want to make sure that the product is licensed CI-4 Plus or CJ-4 oil."

A typical HDEO consists of 75% base oil and 25% additive. It's a delicate balance that can easily be compromised by a fringe player that may not have the most secure supply chain, Parsons points out.

"Product stewardship and integrity along that supply chain is critical," he says. By this time, most fleets and owner/operators have already developed a preference for one brand or another. The next step is to choose the right formulation – and there are choices.

CJ-4 vs CI-4 Plus

When low-soot, EPA07 engines were rolled out to the industry, a low-ash motor oil was also introduced. CJ-4 is completely backwards-compatible for use with pre-07 engines, and is strongly recommended – in some cases required – for 2007 and newer engines.

CJ-4 has demonstrated improvements in areas such as wear protection, deposit control, oxidation control and soot handling, according to Shell's Arcy. However, it also comes with a steeper price tag. Is it worth the extra purchase price? That depends on who you ask.

"There may be a higher cost, but it will help with the long-term

durability of the engine and you're definitely going to have a longer service life of the diesel particulate filter (DPF)," points out Arcy.

Initially, all engine OEMs required the use of CJ-4 oils with 2007 engines for this very reason. It was feared that the higher ash content of CI-4 Plus oils would prematurely clog the DPF and maybe even hinder engine performance.

However, since then, some engine manufacturers have relaxed their requirements for CJ-4 heavy-duty engine oils and will honour warranties regardless of whether a CJ-4 or CI-4 Plus product was used.

This change of heart warrants a re-evaluation of the type of oil fleets and owner/operators should use, admits Parsons, especially if you are running pre-07 engines.

"If you have a pre-07 engine in your truck, why pay more for the CJ-4 when you can run just as well on CI-4 Plus?" he asks.

Even when running 2007 and newer vehicles, it may still make sense to shorten DPF cleaning intervals in order to save money by using a CI-4 Plus oil, he says.

"You may have to clean out the DPF a little bit earlier, but having the ash removed from the DPF costs about \$100-\$200. So if a fleet or owner/operator was to do the math... (and clean) out that trap one additional time over a 300,000-mile period, maybe the economics come out in favour of CI-4 Plus."

It's an honest opinion – and one that's not likely to win him any favours with other players in the market, which are pushing the industry to transition entirely to CJ-4 Plus oils, so they can collectively recoup the investment they've made in developing the new formula (suggested to be as much as US\$70 million).

"We spent a heckuva lot of money developing CJ-4, so there is a desire to recover the investment and for people to use the latest and greatest," acknowledges Parsons.

Fleets should also be cognizant that there is a cost associated with carrying two types of oil, and as EPA07 engines continue to displace older model equipment, it may be more cost-effective to make the wholesale change to CJ-4.

Arcy points out if you continue to use CI-4 Plus oil with EPA07 engines, the DPF cleaning interval will be compromised in direct relation to the ash content of the oil. CI-4 Plus has about a 50% higher ash content than CJ-4, so a DPF that can go 300,000 miles between cleanings with CJ-4 may only reach 200,000 miles or so if you're using CI-4 Plus.

Conventional vs. synthetic

Another consideration for fleets



DON'T BE A DIPSTICK: It is possible to trim your oil budget without simply buying an inferior product.

may be the potential to save fuel by upgrading to synthetic HDEOs. But like the CJ-4 vs. CI-4 Plus debate, there are trade-offs to consider – most notably purchase price. Some oil marketers are certainly more aggressive than others when promoting their synthetic HDEOs.

Paula Del Castilho, category manager with Petro-Canada's commercial transportation lubricants division, is one such proponent of synthetic HDEOs.

She says synthetic engine oils not only improve fuel mileage, but will improve cold weather startability and provide better long-term engine protection.

"If it's -30C outside, you can go out and turn on the vehicle with a 0w40 (synthetic) and not have to wait as long as with the 15w40," she says. Since trucks with synthetic HDEOs don't have to be warmed up, there's an opportunity to reduce idle time and save fuel, she adds.

Shell's Arcy says fleets have realized fuel savings of about 1% when switching to a synthetic HDEO, which can amount to annual fuel savings of about US\$450/year based on 120,000 miles per year at 6 mpg. Arcy also points out synthetic oil can save fleets money by reducing downtime and the need for jump-starts in cold climates.

However, not everyone is as convinced. Parsons says of the major US fleets he works with, "none of them are using synthetic motor oil."

He admits there are advantages in extreme conditions, but adds: "to just switch to a synthetic in normal ambient-type conditions to gain fuel efficiency, the big fleets aren't doing that – they're not buying it."

EXTEND DRAIN INTERVALS

What most oil companies will agree on, is the potential for saving money by extending drain intervals. They also agree this should not be done arbitrarily, but rather in conjunction with a used oil analysis program. Big fleets have been conducting oil analysis

programs for years. However, the savings are equally beneficial to small fleets and even owner/operators.

"The two go hand-in-hand," Mark Pagnanelli, heavy-duty sales and marketing manager with Castrol distributor Wakefield Canada, says of extended drains and an oil analysis program. "We believe in oil analysis so strongly, that it's part of our total package (with customers)."

When it comes to engine oil, extending drains represents arguably the greatest opportunity for savings. Pagnanelli says fleets have realized 10-15% savings in oil costs by nearly doubling oil change intervals.

But it doesn't happen overnight. Pagnanelli says fleets must first complete an oil analysis and then adjust intervals accordingly, usually in stages.

Getting an oil analysis completed may be the crucial first step to extending drains, but it's just as important to properly interpret the results. Chevron Oronite's Parsons likens it to a blood test – unless you're a doctor, you won't know what to make of the results.

According to an online report by Imperial Oil, "The laboratory inspections include measurements of viscosity, water and foreign contaminants (sediment/particulate), metal analysis to identify additive depletion, wear metals, or other metallic contaminants, glycol testing for engine oils, and oxidation levels."

If it sounds Greek to you, be sure to work closely with your oil supplier and engine manufacturer to determine optimum drain intervals.

Once the oil analysis is completed (you may even be able to get your oil supplier to offset the cost), you can begin extending drains based on your specific results. The big fleets do it already, but small fleets are only beginning to warm up to the idea and owner/operators are mostly leaving money on the table by sticking to their overly-cautious drain cycles.

"The large fleets will typically extend their oil out 45,000-50,000 miles based on our survey data

but the information I've seen from owner/operators shows they still typically change their oil every 12,000-15,000 miles," says Parsons. He's puzzled by the gap – especially since most engine OEMs now offer 25,000-mile intervals. "They operate not only from a business standpoint, but also from an emotional standpoint," Parsons says of owner/ops. "That truck is their livelihood and they treat it like a family member."

DON'T TRY TO BE A CHEMIST

There are many types of engine oil additives on the market, but these should be avoided at all costs, according to Parsons.

And this comes from a guy who works for an additive company – but in Oronite's case, its products are added right at the refinery, which is the way it should be, Parsons says.

"Don't use supplemental additives," he insists.

To gain OEM approval, an oil company must run as many as nine different engine tests and six

bench tests, which measure everything from piston deposits to wear control to low temperature performance. The tests cost as much as US\$700,000 to complete and the total cost of gaining OEM approval is about \$1.5 million.

Throughout the process, additives such as anti-wear agents and detergents are added in measured amounts.

"If you throw in a supplemental additive, it may have a detergent or a dispersant that in its own right may be a good additive," says Parsons. "But one thing is for sure, you're going to throw off the balance of additives that's in that oil."

Not only can supplemental additives throw off the balance and result in engine problems, but good luck getting repairs covered by warranty, warns Parsons.

KNOW HOW TO SHOP

Finally, how you buy your oil can also contribute to reduced costs. For starters, volume discounts may be available by using one supplier for all your oil, lube and fuel needs.

"When you consolidate all your lubricants to one supplier, there may be some opportunities for price savings," points out Petro-Canada's Del Castilho. When measuring the potential savings, don't forget to factor in the costs of invoicing multiple suppliers, adds Shell's Arcy.

"There are some pretty significant costs to get that invoice processed and that cheque out the door," he notes. "If you have three different suppliers instead of one, you have three times the invoicing costs."

Fleets should also work with their supplier to ensure they're buying product in the most cost-effective volumes, Arcy adds. "Does your fleet warrant having a bulk tank put in? That can help lower costs, because you don't have to dispose of the drums and you don't have to worry about the drums sitting around and dripping on the floor."

Fleets and owner/operators alike should keep a spare jug of motor oil in every truck, so they can top off while on the road when necessary, without paying

inflated truck stop prices.

Arcy also suggests fleets see whether there's a market for used oil in their area.

In the past, fleets have been forced to pay disposal fees to get rid of it, but Arcy notes a market has developed for used oil in some areas, which is purchased by re-refiners. Establishing a used oil reclamation project can turn a former cost into a source of revenue.

When it comes to oil and lubes, the opportunities to reduce costs are nearly endless. Just don't resort to buying a cheaper product in hopes it will deliver brand name performance at a fraction of the cost, reputable oil companies warn.

"A decrease of 10 cents on an invoice price is really a short-term gain, and most companies that push that route are essentially turning back the clock on their maintenance program five to 10 years," insists Pagnanelli. "That lower cost comes from somewhere. Look at the good, better, best scenario – not the bottom line on the invoice." □

Financing

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – There's a widely-held belief in the transportation industry that the global financial crisis is preventing trucking companies from accessing the capital they need to grow their businesses.

In the Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA's) Business Pulse e-Survey for the fourth quarter of 2008, 72% of fleets reported their access to credit was tightening.

It was only marginally better during the Q1 2009 survey, with 67% of respondents saying their access to credit was tightening and 33% reporting 'no change.' (Not a single fleet said its access to credit was easing).

While it may appear that financiers are feeling rather ungenerous these days, the reality is that the tightening credit situation is more a reflection of the deteriorating state of the industry's collective balance sheets, according to lenders.

"We have not changed any of our underwriting criteria or our procedures to evaluate the creditworthiness of prospective clients," insists Patrick Palerme, president and CEO of GE Capital Solutions. "We have observed signs of deterioration of companies' balance sheets as a consequence of the poor economic conditions."

David Brown, national sales and marketing manager with Daimler Truck Financial, agrees.

"There's no shortage of money available," he says. "The larger and better-financed companies have had no problem getting credit. I think what has entered the market somewhat, is funders have gotten more selective to a degree."

While large-scale, truck-centric lenders are still doling out the money to stable trucking firms, some smaller finance companies

have left the market due to funding issues of their own. And big banks are shying away from trucking companies, due to the high level of risk associated with the industry.

Palerme said the crisis may have peaked in the fourth quarter of 2008, with some stability returning to the market early this year.

"The extreme and unprecedented volatility seen in the last quarter (of 08) made it difficult for us to intelligently price deals in the last quarter," he says. "Since the last quarter of 08, the situation has improved a lot for us and it's business as usual."

So the good news is credit is still available for transportation companies.

The bad news is that prospective lenders will be going over your balance sheet with a fine-toothed comb to ensure their investment is safe.

With a rapidly-falling loonie, evaporating southbound freight, volatile fuel prices and general economic malaise, be prepared to open your books to lenders.

"When we meet customers, we ask to see their latest

financial trends," explains Palerme. "Any prudent lender will look at the balance sheet and make sure our customers will survive in the long-term."

They look to ensure the fleet is collecting appropriate fuel surcharges, charging profitable rates, etc.

"One thing that never changes year in and year out, cycle in and cycle out is: balance sheet strength; operating ratio; working capital ratio; all those key ratios are king," adds Brown.

"And in a capital-intensive industry like trucking, the better financed you are, the more consistently profitable you are, the better able you are to weather the ups and downs."

There are steps a company can take to improve its chances of obtaining credit when it's needed, even in an uncertain business environment, according to GE's Palerme.

1. Diversify lending sources: "Don't put all your eggs in one basket and keep a relationship with just one lender," Palerme suggests. He advises customers to shop around, compare rates and services

and develop relationships with multiple lenders.

2. Plan ahead: Look ahead and anticipate when financing may be required, suggests Palerme. If you're a small fleet especially, "Don't come suddenly and say you need financing for three trucks this week because you're getting deliveries on the weekend."

3. Set up a pre-approved line of credit: Applying for a line of credit will ensure you have immediate access to money when the need arises unexpectedly. It will also allow you to develop a relationship with your lender and discuss future financing options.

4. Reassess your needs quarterly: Palerme suggests constantly re-evaluating your financing needs on a quarterly basis.

5. Communicate with your financial partners: Keep the communication channels with your lenders open at all times, advises Palerme. Keep them informed of challenges and changes affecting your business and always be honest.

If you do qualify for credit, expect to pay more for it.

While interest rates on big ticket items like mortgages and passenger vehicles may be dropping, the same cannot be said for finance rates on new equipment.

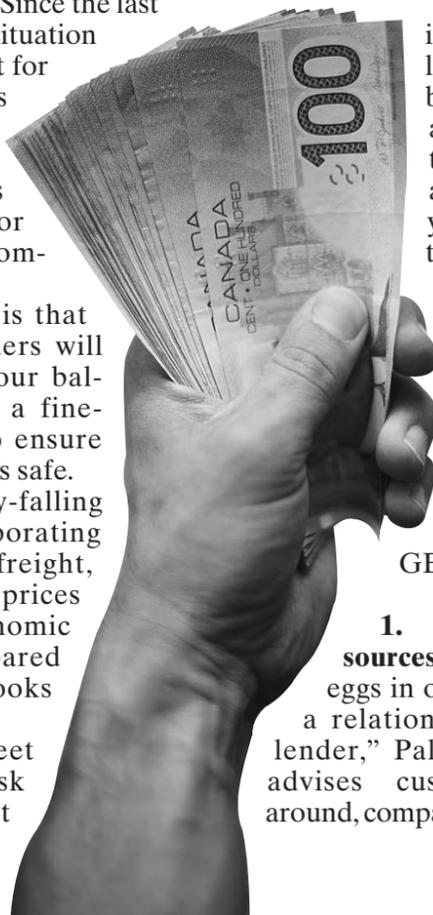
"Before the financial meltdown, the transport industry was benefiting from the best interest rates the industry has ever experienced," says Palerme. "But the risk/reward equation was not working at all – the rates were very small and the risks were still pretty high."

Daimler's Brown says rates are still very attractive for well-financed, profitable fleets.

"The better-financed fleets are getting extremely attractive rates right now, for those fleets where the balance sheet is not as strong, the rates go up." □

Credit crunch

Fleets report tightening credit, but finance companies say lending criteria has not changed



Profile

By Jan Westell

DELTA, B.C. – The long, narrow road that leads to a vacant industrial site along the shore of the Fraser River makes an ideal setting for the paranormal TV thriller *Supernatural*, especially after night falls. It's only a temporary location for the American drama/horror TV series, launched in September 2005 with production based out of Burnaby. The constant relocation of dressing rooms, hair and make-up trailers, washrooms, catering, technical equipment and other creative facilities, offers a steady assignment for one truck driver.

Steve Woods hauls Northern Special Effect's 10-tonne trailer from site to site, with an immaculate and well-polished 1994 Peterbilt. The Teamster member also leases out his own company's pick-up, for smaller deliveries.

Business is booming for Woods, even while most of the trucking industry is experiencing a downturn.

"There's a lot of work now in Vancouver," says Woods. "There's about 16 shows starting up in the next couple of months, and everybody that has anything to do with the film industry is going to be working."

Trucking for the film industry may seem like a plum – if not cushy – professional driving job, but Woods emphasizes that the 'biz' is not for everybody. Certainly the distances are short, the pay is good, and the job usually comes with two meals a day, not to mention the potential for overtime pay. However, this seasoned trucker indicates that the film industry would not appeal to the independent driver who enjoys solitary adventures exploring North America's open road.

"A lot of guys that are serious about trucking, they're not too interested," says Woods, who estimates he only logs about 5,600 kms a year with the Peterbilt. He admits to his own misgivings over the 25 years he has been driving sporadically for an industry that offers occasionally-unchallenging assignments.

"It's one of the reasons that I left the business. I would keep coming

Lights, cameras... ACTION!



ON SET: Steve Woods says hauling equipment for big screen productions isn't for everyone, but the niche suits his needs well.

came back to films, but I still had some trucking left in my blood."

Originally from Victoria, Woods got his start in the freight business in the early 1970s and later hauled oil rig equipment along the Alaska Highway. He moved to Fort St. John in 1976, before relocating back to Vancouver Island in 1981. He then drove for the construction and road building industry near Courtenay, just before the recession of 1983-84. That's when work for this trucker dried up.

Woods received a fortuitous call from a friend who asked him if his union dues were paid up: if so, he'd be a candidate to drive for the emerging film industry. It was a surprising opportunity that Woods was completely naive about at that time. "I had no idea there was a film business in Vancouver," he admits.

The opportunity was the begin-

ning of a lengthy driving gig with the film industry, despite unpredictable employment periods between 1984 and 1986, before the film business grew in 1987. That's when Cannell Films located to Vancouver with its *Wiseguy* TV series, a two-season run that offered Woods a brief period of stability. However, a career in the film industry rarely offers long-term employment, especially a TV series that breaks for an annual hiatus, with network renewal always in question.

As a result of frequent layoffs, Woods often supplemented his income by returning to the oil patch. He also sought out opportunities to make extra income on the set. He soon discovered the lucrative business of leasing equipment for film production.

"I bought an old Kenworth and put a new Manitex crane on it and built an aerial platform, used to do exterior lighting at night," he says of a plan that was well-received, but limited by a scheduling glitch. "What I realized was that on a TV series, they try to do three days of daytime shooting, either in the studio or outside, and then Thursday or Friday

they would shoot nights."

That meant demand was up on Thursday and Friday night, but down throughout the rest of the five-day work week, which caused a financial challenge and forced Woods back to the oil patch in 1993.

"I'd go up there and I'd haul pipe to drilling rigs and come back here and work on shows as a driver, driving whatever they wanted. I just parked the crane. For a while there, I had somebody else driving it part-time. I'd work full-time on shows, driving the dressing room, or the honey wagons (toilets) or the tractor-trailers. Whatever they wanted me to do."

In the spring of 1997, Woods was back working for the film industry once again, but it wasn't the erratic assignments that he found unsettling this time. It was the dreary weather of the Lower Mainland. He yearned for the sunny skies prevalent in the north, and he returned once again to Fort St. John. He took on seasonal work for six years, until he'd had enough of that area's extreme weather. "I think I froze my fingers one too many times," he recalls.

At that time, he called down to Vancouver for work and was offered a job driving for a feature film that was situated at a picturesque ranch near Kamloops. *Unfinished Life* (2003) starred Robert Redford, Morgan Freeman and Jennifer Lopez.

"It was the best show I've ever worked on as far as the quality of the equipment, the production people, great cast and a great location out on this beautiful old farm. So, I got the lure of the film industry again," he recalls.

Once in awhile, Woods has enjoyed long distance travel with the film industry, including driving throughout B.C., Alberta, the Yukon and even the Alaska Panhandle.

But, as the years rolled by, Woods once again realized he wasn't entirely satisfied with the erratic nature of the film industry. He moved to Penticton, with the intention of selling real estate shortly before the bubble burst on B.C.'s lucrative housing market. After that short career transformation, he is back with the film industry, but remains philosophical about his fate.

He considers himself to be extremely fortunate to be employed in trucking during an economic slowdown where other driving jobs have dwindled. □

WOWTRUCKS - Canada 2008

An Image Tribute to the 2008 Show 'n' Shine Season

By David Benjatschek

This book, created in conjunction with Pro-Trucker Magazine and Truck News, is an image tribute to 525 trucks met at several major Show 'n' Shine competitions across Canada in 2008.

Trucks covered are from the following shows:

- The Pro-Trucker Alberta Big Rig Weekend
- The Pro-Trucker BC Big Rig Weekend
- The Fergus Truck Show
- Rodeo du Camion

Also including: the Vancouver Island Truck Show and the Northern BC Show 'n' Shine.

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Monitor your profile's perception and reality

It's easy to understand why fleets are so interested in their carrier profiles. This record of driver and equipment violations ultimately has an impact on everything from a company's insurance premiums to government fines.

It can even determine whether an operating authority is retained or revoked.

That explains why safety-conscious managers are so disturbed when hearing that they've crossed a related threshold on their way to a sanction.

Government officials establish the thresholds for a carrier profile in one of two ways.

While some jurisdictions use actuarial statistics – a process that uses the number of power units or kilometres travelled to determine the number of allowable violations – provinces such as B.C. compare carriers of a similar size. But regardless of the way the thresholds are set and compared, there can be a distinct difference between a fleet manager's perception of safety and the documents that they receive.

The only way to address the gap between perception and reality is to ensure that carrier profiles are properly managed and maintained in the first place.

The first step to eliminating these surprises is to ensure that the profiles are reviewed at least once a month.

Fleets can simply submit a standing request for copies of the related documents to ensure that the latest statistics are always in hand.

Then it is a matter of addressing any discrepancies that exist.

The differences between a fleet's perceived safety record and the government's carrier profile can emerge for a number of reasons. A simple clerical error while entering the number for an operating authority could assign a fleet's violations to a different company's profile.

Or a new driver might be reluctant to report violations such as a speeding ticket, with the mistaken assumption that the news will be lost in the shuffle.

Luckily, a simple scan of the profile could identify many of these issues.

The bigger challenge is that fleets are not always recognized for all of the clean inspections that occur, and that can play a significant role in the calculation that determines whether the company is sitting above or below an allowable threshold.

After all, a driver may be happy to receive a verbal 'okay' from an inspection officer, but the lack of paperwork will offer little support to a carrier profile.

This is why drivers and owner/operators should be encouraged to make a polite request for a copy of every inspection report.

If the document isn't forthcoming, they should simply record the date and time of the inspection and provide that information to safety managers.

Some fleets even award safety bonuses for every positive report, offering drivers an added incentive to gather the information.

Ask the Expert

Rick Geller



Granted, a thorough analysis of a carrier profile may require a slight change to filing systems. While many carriers include inspection reports within their equipment files, the documents should also be filed by jurisdiction, making it easier to track how many inspections have been conducted, how many have been passed, and the reasons for any violations. Another approach is to track the details on a simple spreadsheet.

It's also important to remember that this process is about far more than measuring a carrier's experience against a government thresh-

old. Indeed, these profiles represent a valuable tool for identifying high-risk drivers and training needs.

Look no further than the number of speeding violations for a great example. An analysis of the information on a carrier profile can help to determine if the violations are linked to a particular driver, route or customer.

An excessive number of violations relating to hours-of-service can help to identify training needs for drivers or dispatchers alike.

And a spike in a particular category of equipment violations such as out-of-adjustment brakes can be used to refine maintenance practices.

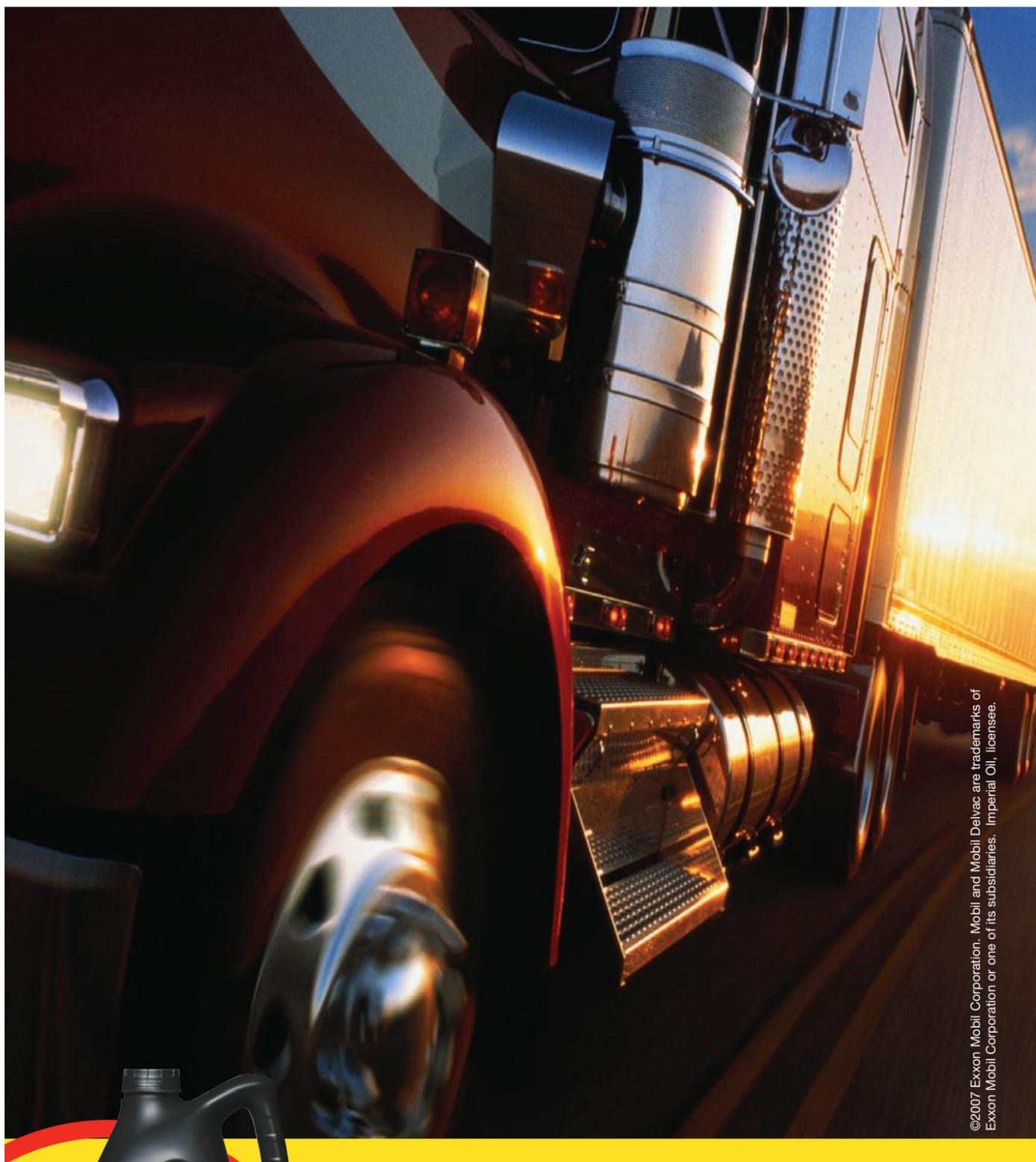
By matching this information to industry benchmarks that are available through your insurer's safety advisors, managers will even be able to identify the details that can manage driver behaviour.

Fundamentally, most drivers want to do the best job they can. A violation may simply be a wake-up call for an issue that needs to be addressed.

And who wouldn't respond to a statistic that identifies exactly how much more likely they are to be involved in a crash over the next 12 months, complete with details about the likelihood that they will not survive?

An accurate carrier profile will provide a fleet with the statistics that help to make this point, and point the business toward a safer reality. □

– This month's expert is Rick Geller. Rick is the National Manager of Safety and Training Services for Markel Insurance Company of Canada and has more than 25 years experience providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca.



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OEM/Dealer News

DoE testing validates wide-base singles

GREENVILLE, S.C. – The fuel-saving claims behind wide-base single tires have been validated by the US Department of Energy.

The DoE has released a 383-page report that indicates wide-base single tires are 6-10% more fuel efficient than duals on heavy trucks.

The report was based on more than 700,000 miles of real-world testing over the course of four years, according to a release by Michelin.

"If fleets and owner/operators needed more proof that wide singles can save fuel costs, look no further," said David Stafford, chief operating officer of Michelin Americas Research Company (MARC).

"This real-world field testing confirms what our engineers and designers have said since we launched the Michelin X One nine years ago – that replacing

duals with wide single tires not only reduces rolling resistance and saves energy, but also reduces the amount of CO₂ we put into the atmosphere."

The DoE test compared the Michelin X One single to standard dual tires.

The tests revealed a 6% fuel economy improvement overall and as high as 10% with fully-loaded tractor-trailers, according to Michelin.

"Our tests have found wide single tire technology to be more fuel efficient in a variety of real-world conditions," said Bill Knee, director of vehicle safety research at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

"As we continue the national and global discussion of conserving energy, fossil fuels and other natural resources, this technology is a solution that is making a difference today." □

Ice road truckers choose OmniVision tracking system

YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T. – Shaw Tracking has announced RTL Robinson Enterprises has implemented its OmniVision mobile computing platform.

RTL Robinson Enterprises specializes in bulk fuel re-supply for many of the diamond mines and communities in the N.W.T. The re-supply occurs during the winter months when trucks travel along the winter ice roads, which are built over frozen lakes and tundra. The ice roads offer an economical alternative to supply by aircraft, for areas not on the regular road system. Each year, RTL builds and maintains winter roads to deliver fuel, equipment and other goods to remote locations.

"Satellite communication was essential for us as our head office is in Yellowknife and many of our drivers travel north from there," said Tom Kenny, CEO, RTL Robinson Enterprises. "To ensure the safety of our drivers, we must have a communication solution that we know we can rely on. Shaw Tracking provided that for us. We were also looking for a technology that would easily integrate with our existing dispatch software."

The new OmniVision platform has several applications that RTL is interested in, including: automated hours-of-service, critical event reporting, and in-cab driver e-mail, added Kenny.

"We see these applications as tools that will enable our drivers to do more from the cab of their vehicles. These value-added services will provide us with a return on our investment, through improvements in our operations and increase our bottom line." □

Western Canada Freightliner dealers honoured

EDMONTON, Alta. – Freightliner Trucks has announced that five Canadian dealerships have been named to its list of 2008 ASPIRE award winners.

The ASPIRE (Acknowledging Sales, Parts and service, Image and Relationship Excellence) program recognizes vision, dedication and persistence of North American Freightliner Trucks' dealers who push the boundaries of success in sales, service and customer support, according to a statement from the company.

The Summit Award (for dealers

who score in the top 10) include: First Truck Centre of Edmonton, Alta.; Freightliner Manitoba of Winnipeg, Man.; Boyer Truck Sales of Thunder Bay, Ont.; and Valley Equipment of Hartland, N.B. The Alpine Award (for dealers in the next 10) went to Services De Mecanique Mobile B.L. of Granby, Que.

"Our ASPIRE winners are the best of the best in setting new standards for sales, service and customer support," said Jack Conlan, senior vice-president, customer support. □

Raydan trims losses in third quarter

EDMONTON, Alta. – Canadian suspension manufacturer, Raydan Manufacturing, trimmed its losses in the third quarter.

Q3 revenue was \$4.6 million with a loss of \$32,752, which compares to a loss of \$468,586 for the same period a year ago. For the nine-month period ending Jan. 31, 2009,

revenue was \$14.1 million with a loss of \$779,836.

Raydan credits strong manufacturing and military revenue in Alberta with improved parts and service revenue in Ontario for the improvements. It also eliminated the revenue losses stemming from its Alberta parts and service business, which was closed last October.

The company said it is working on several new projects, including a multi-axle suspension the company says will expand the market for its products. □

Canadian to chair Kenworth's 2009 Dealer Council

REGINA, Sask. – Kenworth has named its 2009 Kenworth Dealer Council members, including two Canadians: chairman Brent Leach of Custom Truck Sales, Regina, Sask., and Jim Beiderwieden of Inland Kenworth, Burnaby, B.C.

The eight-member council consists of leading executives from among more than 300 Kenworth dealerships in the US and Canada, according to the manufacturer of heavy- and medium-duty trucks.

The council's goal is to help promote program consistency across the dealer network, with the intention that every Kenworth dealership provides a superior level of customer service, adds the company. □

MISSING

MITCHELL KYLE BUNN
4090-SR

D.O.B.: Dec. 18, 1985

Missing since: October 03, 2007

Missing from: Birdtail Sioux First Nation,
Manitoba

Height: 5' 8"

Weight: 160 lbs.

Eye Colour: Brown

Hair Colour: Brown

Bunn has tattoos on his arm of a Salamander, his last name "BUNN" in old English font and rain drop circles on his arms.

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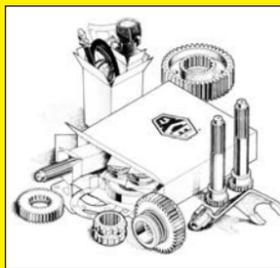
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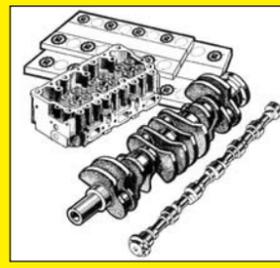
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People

Ralph Boles of Bison Transport placed third in the Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) Equipment Driver of the Year contest. Boles has been a driver with Bison Transport since 1974 and has logged more than 4.5 million accident-free miles during his career, according to TCA.

He has accumulated seven safe driving awards and two Driver of the Month awards from the Manitoba Trucking Association.

The Bison driver also sits on Bison's Driver Advisory Board and its Accident Appeal Board. In this role, Boles is in a position to advise, review and discuss: policies that need to be changed; accidents and how they should be handled; and the concerns of Bison's drivers and/or the general public.

Recently, he has undertaken a new challenge – serving as an in-cab instructor. This opportunity allows Boles to share his extensive experience in mountain driving, helping Bison's new drivers who are participating in the new driver training program, according to Bison. For his third place prize package, Boles receives \$1,200 in truck stop gift cards, \$750 cash, and a \$250 Best Buy gift card.

The Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) has announced the passing of a prominent member and health and safety advocate, due to cancer on March 25. **John Tessier** had worked with the Alberta trucking industry for many years as a driver and safety officer for carriers, and then with

the Alberta Trucking Industry Safety Association and the AMTA. He retired in 2007 to follow this passion of worker health and safety as an industry consultant, according to the AMTA.

The AMTA is creating a safety award named after Tessier, to be presented at the annual Provincial Truck Driving Championship, another of his passions.

Daimler AG announced several high-ranking personnel changes for its trucks division recently, including the retirement of **Chris Patterson** as head of Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA).

Beginning June 1, he will be replaced by **Marin Daum**, the company announced in a release. Patterson is retiring after 32 years in the North American commercial vehicle industry, 11 of which were with DTNA. His replacement, Daum is currently head of operations at the Mercedes-Benz plant in Woerth, Germany.

Also on June 1, **Dr. Albert Kirchmann** will take over as head of Daimler Trucks Asia. He will also serve as president and CEO of Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corp. He replaces **Harald Boelstler** who is also set to retire.

The Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA's) senior policy advisor, **Barrie Montague**, retired on March 31. He will continue to serve the industry as Commercial Vehicle Operators' Registration (CVOR) facility audit consultant, the OTA has announced. □

Opinion

Lawyers feed public's fear of trucks

A few days ago while I was doing what I do best, changing channels, I came across a commercial for a law firm based out of Buffalo.

Unfortunately, it came as no surprise that they were promoting their services to accident victims involved in big rig truck collisions. I've seen them before, as I'm sure many of you have. It was pure fear-mongering at its finest and it's been going on for years. What bothers me is that Joe Public rarely hears about the trucker who avoids a horrific accident by anticipating the bonehead move a passenger car driver is about to make. It happens all the time.

Instead, we're blasted with headlines that almost always assume that accidents involving trucks are the trucker's fault.

I went online and checked out a number of lawyers' sites who specialize in trucking-related accidents. I should mention that all of the following quotes are taken from US-based Web sites. Regardless, here's how they sell their services to potential clients.

"When a truck accident occurs, trucking companies will often send out representatives including lawyers and insurance agents to confront and intimidate the victim at their most vulnerable." How's that for a warm fuzzy feeling? It's a 'David vs. Goliath' scare tactic.

Most sites made a point of banging off fatality and injury statistics creating a perception that every rig is a rolling death trap.

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



To be fair, I did come across one site that took the time to explain that many trucking accidents involving cars are in fact the car driver's fault. It goes on to explain the number of idiots out there who don't realize the stopping limitations of a truck. Refreshing indeed.

Here's another quote that left me scratching my head: "For many commercial truck drivers, drug and alcohol use are simply a part of daily operation." What are they saying? Drive a truck and you could become an addict? Unbelievable.

Finally, how about: "Alcohol use by a truck driver can cause serious impairment including poor decision-making, blurry vision, distractions and slowing reaction times."

I suppose this only happens to truckers? What a bunch of crap.

It's too bad lawyers south of the border resign themselves to using scare tactics. I suppose it's because competition is fierce but in the end they aren't doing our industry (on either side of the border) any favours. □

– Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck West and he can be reached at 416-510-5123.

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Owner Operator? Manufacturer _____ Year/Model _____ Engine/Size _____

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Trailer Type Experience (check all that apply): Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____

Current Drivers License: Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No

License # _____ Exp. Date _____ Prov/State Issued _____ Type _____

Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No Total Truck Driving Experience _____ /yrs

Last Employer _____

Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____

Tel _____ Start/End Date _____

Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

Certification/Training: Doubles/Triples Air Brake Adjustment Over-Size Loads Hazmat Air Brake (Drive) Tankers

Name of School _____ Name of Course Completed _____

City _____ Prov/State _____ Start/End Date _____

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THOU SHUNT NOT KILL!

Mark Dalton: Owner Operator

FICTION

Part 1

By Edo van Belkom

Mark was a few hours out of the Rocky Mountains and just a few minutes from his destination, a large truck yard on the Pacific Coast of British Columbia that serviced the ports in and around Vancouver. With his load about to be delivered and no prospects for another, Mark grabbed his cell phone and gave his dispatcher, Bud a call.

"Hello?"

"Hey Bud."

"Who's this?"

Mark let out a sigh and said, "Mark."

"Oh, hey Dalton. How's it going?"

Mark was stunned. "What do you mean, 'Hey Dalton, how's it going?' What happened to 'Mark who?' and that whole routine?"

"I got nothin'," Bud said.

"You ran out of smart-ass comments and rude things to say? I'm calling Mr. Ripley because I don't believe it."

Bud chuckled, but only a little. "No, I mean I've got nothing. No loads. No work."

"Nothing at all?"

"Have you read the papers, Dalton? There's a recession going on, you know."

"But you always have loads, Bud. Sure there's been a few times I've had to wait a day or two for something good, but you've never let me down before."

"Well, the economy affects the best of us, what can I say?"

Mark sighed. "What do you suggest I do?"

"Geez, Dalton, you could take it easy for a while. Aren't you due for a vacation, or something?"

"Or something," Mark said.

"You must have some money socked away somewhere. Go to Vegas, or some place warm."

"I dunno," Mark said, recalling his last real vacation. He went on a trip to Mexico where he got wound up helping a local trucker fight some highway robbers and nearly got himself killed for his trouble. "The last time I tried that, it wasn't much of a vacation."

A pause. "You need to go some place where there are no trucks. How about a cruise?"

"You think that would keep me out of trouble?"

"Probably not," Bud said. "But it's a start."

"I'll think about it," answered Mark. "Either way, I'll call you in a couple of days."

"You know my number," Bud said, hanging up.

Mark put away his phone and signaled for the turn he'd be making into

the truck yard. But as he looked down the road, he could see the flashing lights of a half-dozen police cruisers and emergency vehicles. His first thought was there'd been an accident at the entrance to the yard, but as he neared he saw that the vehicles were not only at the entrance, but inside the yard as well.

He slowed as he approached the gate and an RCMP officer walked up to meet him.

Mark rolled down his window. "What's going on?"

The police woman climbed up the side of the cab. "It's a crime scene."

"Something stolen?"

She shook her head. "Homicide."

Mark felt a chill ice its way down his spine. "I've got to deliver this load."

"Pull in," she said. "The yard manager's about 100 yards in. He'll tell you where to park your trailer."

"Thanks," Mark said. He put Mother Load into gear and drove into the truck yard. It was one of the biggest yards he'd ever seen with hundreds, maybe even a thousand trailers all crammed into a space that was obviously over-capacity.

A short distance away, a man wearing a bright orange vest was waving a flashlight, flagging him down.

Mark slowed to a stop.

The man with the vest remained on the ground and called up to Mark.

"Picking up or dropping off?"

"Dropping off."

"Great."

Mark waited for him to say something else, but he just stood there rubbing his hand across his forehead. "Well," he said at last. "Where do you want me to put it?"

"Uh, anywhere you like..."

"Anywhere," Mark said, seeing that the yard was pretty crammed.

"Wherever you can find a spot, then see me on your way out."

"Will do," Mark said. He pulled forward slowly and began searching for an empty spot to drop his trailer. But by the time he was more than halfway around the yard it was obvious to Mark that it wasn't going to be easy to find an opening. Then, at the very furthest corner of the yard, he found a spot. However, it was just barely wide enough for a trailer. If he had to measure the opening, Mark guessed there was less than inches to spare on either side of his trailer.

He looked around. "Doesn't this yard have a shunt driver?" he said aloud. Mark had been to several yards where he could have just dropped the trailer off and the shunt driver would park it in the right spot. They had the right rigs for it

ter all, with small maneuverable trucks, a 360-degree view and an intimate knowledge of a yard that otherwise looked like a war zone to any long-haul trucker.

But with all the emergency vehicles in the yard and the police investigating a homicide there wasn't going to be anyone coming to his aid anytime soon. He'd have to park the trailer on his own and the sooner the better. And so Mark took a wide left-hand turn to line up the end of the trailer with the narrow opening. It took three tries before he had it all lined up but once he was in place the trailer slid into the open space as if its sides had been greased with motor oil.

"Like a glove!" Mark said aloud as he backed the trailer the last few inches.

"Nice!" said a voice from outside the cab.

before I got here and he says he's got nothing for me for a few days."

"You're kidding?"

"Nope. No loads for a while."

"Isn't that something?"

"Why?"

"You want to work here?"

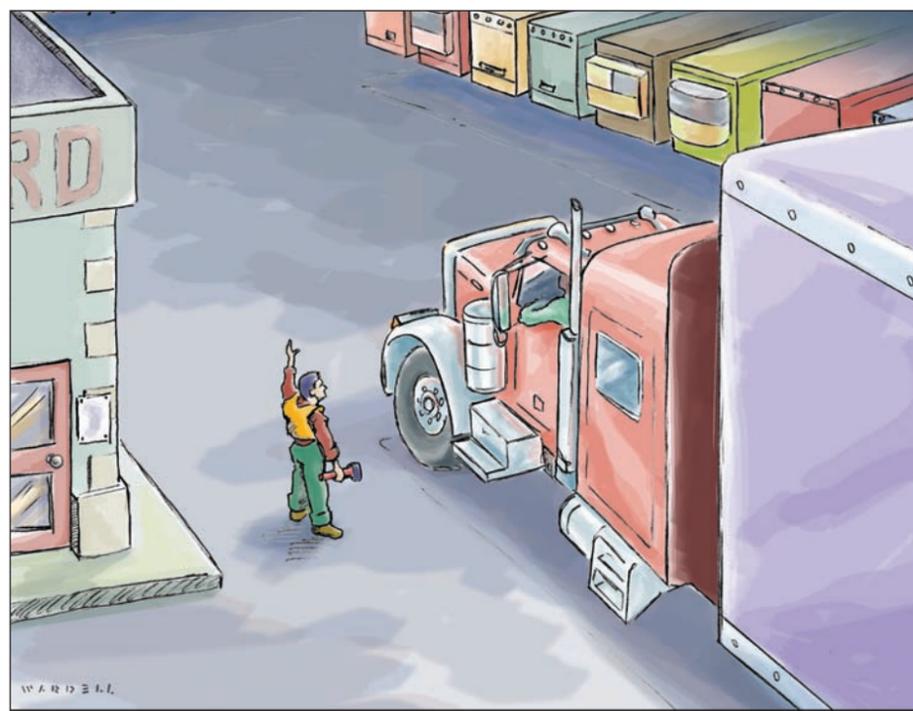
"Doing what?"

"Well, the homicide the police are investigating was my shunt driver."

"Who killed him?"

"That's what they're trying to figure out. In the meantime, I've got a yard to run and no shunt driver to keep everything organized. You want the job, it's yours. If not, I've gotta call a shunt company and have them send over a driver."

Mark took a moment to think about it. Bud had nothing, this man was offering work, and there was a murder that



Mark looked over and saw the yard manager standing a few feet away. He smiled, set Mother Load's parking brake and jumped down from the cab.

"Well," he said with a hint of pride in his voice. "I have parked a few trailers in my time."

"I can see that," the yard manager said, nodding. Mark set about lowering the landing gear, disconnecting the glad hands, then released the fifth wheel.

He had it all done in just a couple of minutes and when he was done, he collected up his paperwork and presented it all to the yard manager.

"How you doin' these days?"

"What do you mean, like for work?"

"Yeah, you got a load waiting for you?"

Mark smiled. "Funny you should say that," he said. "I just called my dispatcher

needed to be solved. It sounded like the perfect job for Mark Dalton. "Yeah, I can shunt for a while. When do you want me to start?"

"How 'bout right now?"

Mark hesitated, then realized that even though he had no on-duty time left in his logbook, he could drive a shunt truck all he wanted and it never had to be recorded in his log.

"Sure," Mark said.

"Here's the key to the yard mule. We've got six more loads coming in tonight, four going out. Make sure there's room for them all."

"Will do," Mark said taking the keys. He was looking forward to being a shunt driver. After all, how hard could it be? □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of 'Thou shunt not kill.'

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FORM MUST BE FILLED IN COMPLETELY AND NOMINEE MUST HAVE CLEAN DRIVER'S ABSTRACT

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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – It’s been more than three months since the much-debated Bill 41 – that requires heavy trucks to be governed at no more than 105 km/h – kicked off in Ontario and Quebec. But the question is: can anyone really tell a difference?

The government is allowing for a six-month grace period until July 1, so how many truckers are getting used to having their speed limited and how many are taking advantage of these last few weeks of enforcement-free driving? *Truck West* stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see if drivers have noticed a slow-down on the highways since speed limiters became law.

Michael Jarrett, a driver with Horizon Transport in Indiana, says that when he comes up to Ontario, many truckers are driving faster than 105 km/h.

“Everyone is still passing me,” Jarrett says, adding “I think it’s



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Managing Editor

Have you noticed a difference since speed limiters became mandatory?

wrong to try to limit every truck to just what this province wants. It should be up to the individual driver to control their own foot.”

Rob Whitmore, a driver with Mark Kennedy Trucking in Ilderton, Ont., says he’s seen a few truck drivers that seem to be slowing down to 105 km/h, but added that truckers usually work hard to ensure safe driving – with or without speed limiters.

“The public may not seem to think so, the government may not seem to think so, (but) most drivers out there are very conscious of safe-



Rob Whitmore

ty,” he says. “Personally, I don’t agree with (105 km/h). It’s too slow. I’ve never really seen or had issues

with the so-called ‘renegade truckers.’ The public sees one and they think everybody does it.”



Norman Laviolette

Norman Laviolette, a driver with Will-Bill Express in Lac Brome, Que., says not much has changed since speed limiters became law and suspects most drivers are waiting until the last minute to change. If anything, Laviolette says the drivers that have decided to turn on their limiters are causing confusion on the roads.

“Sometimes it gets a little more confusing, if anything, because the cars are still going (faster),” he says. “Some trucks might be doing 104 km/h and you’re doing 105 km/h so...it takes longer to get by them and there’s a line-up of traffic. That’s just more cause for an accident. We need to go and get out of the way. Why didn’t they just enforce the law that they already had? I’m thinking you’re going to see a higher amount of accidents than anything.”



Tom Eldridge

Tom Eldridge, also a driver with Will-Bill, agrees with Laviolette, saying that speed limiters seem to be causing more confusion among both car and truck drivers and are actually making things less safe.

“Everyone used to drive their own speed. I don’t believe it’s any safer,” he says. “We’re professionals. We’ve got a pretty good idea of what we’re doing most of the time. The speed limiters suck and in my 20 years’ experience I’ve never been in a locked truck until now. And it may be my last one.”

Donald Smith, a driver with TD Smith Transport in Mount Forest, Ont., fully admits to not having turned on his speed governor yet – but not because he likes to speed.

“I only run about 60-62 mph anyway, but you need the extra speed once in a while to get out of a situation,” says the 40-year veteran. “I run legal. I pay for my licence myself and that is supposed to allow me to run in every state in the US and every province in Canada at the speed limits these provinces and states have got. But Ontario thinks they’ve got the right to cut me back so I can’t do any of that in any of those states and I don’t think that’s right for Ontario to be doing that. They shouldn’t have that kind of power.” □

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